

Political Campaigns in Japan : The Art of Connection

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\$5.50

MANGAJIN

No. 59

# CAMPAGNING IN JAPAN

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# 加治隆介の議

Kaji Ryūsuke no Gi

## Kaji Ryūsuke's Agenda

by 弘兼憲史

Hirokane Kenshi

**Scandals, deception, infighting, gridlock**—business as usual for politics in Japan. The artist Hirokane Kenshi (the well-known creator of *Kachō Shima Kōsaku* and artist of the series *Ningen Kōsaten*, both featured in earlier issues of *Mangajin*) approaches this inexhaustible subject from the inside with his latest solo project, *Kaji Ryūsuke no Gi*.

**Kaji Ryūsuke**, the 39-year-old second son of a powerful politician, is from Kagoshima on the island of Kyushu. A graduate of the prestigious University of Tokyo, he has built a successful career as an elite salaryman at one of Japan's foremost corporations. Becoming a politician like his father, Kaji Motoharu, is the farthest thing from his mind. Talented, confident, and hotheaded (one colleague compares him to a "wild thoroughbred"), he evokes both respect and censure from those around him.



**Ichinoseki Ayumi** is an employee under Ryūsuke. She is also his lover.



**Kaji Yukiko, Ryūsuke's wife**, lives at the Kaji family home in Kagoshima in order to be with their son who attends the elite prep school La Salle.



**Yamamoto Makio** is secretary-general of the Nishikie club, Kaji Motoharu's political support group in Kagoshima.

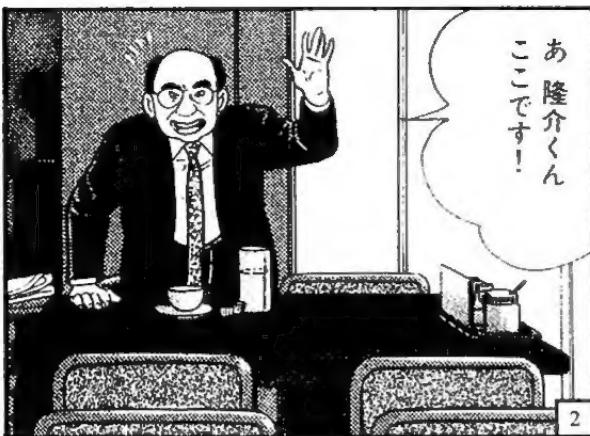
**Shortly after** the story begins, Ryūsuke and Ayumi are awakened (post-lusty encounter) in their Tokyo hotel room by Ryūsuke's beeper; his office had received an urgent call from his wife in Kagoshima. The news is grim: driving home after a long day of campaigning in Kyushu, Ryūsuke's brother had fallen asleep at the wheel and his father was killed instantly in the crash.

**Ryūsuke rushes back** to Kyushu. His brother dies in the hospital, but not before imploring Ryūsuke to carry on the family's political tradition for the sake of their father's memory—and for the country.

**At the funeral**, the prime minister himself (a longtime friend of Kaji Motoharu) asks Ryūsuke to run for office. With scandals wearing down the party's popularity, only someone with the powerful Kaji name can win the Kagoshima race. The party can't afford to lose that crucial district if it hopes to retain the leadership of the Diet. Even so, Ryūsuke refuses the prime minister to his face—a shocking thing, indeed.

**Ryūsuke returns** to Tokyo. Having read some of his father's memoirs, for the first time he begins to respect his father as a politician. Although accused of being involved in a scandal, it looks as though he was simply made the scapegoat in order to protect the prime minister.

**The plot thickens**—a politician from the prime minister's cabinet makes a racist comment while visiting the US, and although he claims he was misinterpreted, it has weakened the party's position. If Ryūsuke doesn't run for office, the party is doomed. Ryūsuke's lover, meanwhile, tells him that she is pregnant and wants to keep the baby. We pick up the story a few days later as Ryūsuke meets Yamamoto in a Tokyo coffee shop.



1

**Waiter:** いらっしゃいませえ。  
*Irasshaimasē.*

welcome

**“Come right in!” (PL4)**

- *irasshaimase* is a polite command form of the PL4 verb *irassharu* (“come”). It’s the standard expression for welcoming a visitor to one’s home or customers to one’s place of business.

2

**Yamamoto:** あ、 隆介くん。 ここ です!

*A, Ryūsuke-kun, Koko desu!*  
 (interj.) (name-fam.) here is/are/am

**“Oh, Ryūsuke. I’m over here.” (PL3)**

- Yamamoto, as a longtime family friend and a generation older than Kaji, addresses Kaji here by his first name plus the polite but relatively familiar *-kun*. Below, as he begins trying to persuade Kaji to run for office, he switches to the more polite and formal *-san*.

3

**Kaji:** や! こりや どうも、 山本さん。

*Ya! Korya dōmo, Yamamoto-san.*  
 (greeting) as for this (emph.) (name-hon.)

**“Ah! Hello, Mr. Yamamoto.” (PL3)**

- *ya* or *yā* can be used as an informal “hi/hello” by male speakers.
- *dōmo* is actually only an intensifier, but its use with expressions of apology, thanks, and greeting has made it an all-purpose shorthand for those same expressions. It can be either formal or quite informal as suits the occasion. *Korya dōmo* (or the uncontracted *kore wa dōmo*) are common variations.

4

**Yamamoto:** すみません、 お仕事 時間 中 お呼び出しいたしまして。

*Sumimasen, o-shigoto jikan -chū o-yobidashi itashimashite.*  
 (apology) (hon.)-work hours during (hon.)-call/summon out-(cause)

**“I’m sorry to have asked you to come down here during working hours.” (PL4)**

**Kaji:** いえ。 いつ 鹿児島 から 出てこられたんですか?

*Ie. Itsu Kagoshima kara dete korareta n desu ka?*  
 no when (place name) from came out (explan.-?)

**“Not at all. When did you come up from Kagoshima?” (PL4)**

- *sumimasen* can be a polite apology or thanks depending on the context.
- the suffix *-chū* means “during/in the midst of,” so *shigoto jikan-chū* = “during work hours.”
- *o-yobidashi itashimashite* is the *-te* form of *o-yobidashi itashimasu*, a polite PL4 humble form of *yobidasu*, from *yobu* (“call/summon”) and *-dasu*, which implies the action takes place in an outward direction → “call out/away [from something].” The *-te* form is often used to state the cause/reason for what comes next in the sentence, but in this case the syntax is inverted and it is stating the cause/reason for his apology.
- *ie* is a shortened *ie* (“no”), often used like “not at all.”
- Kagoshima is the name of a major city and a prefecture in southern Kyushu.
- *dete korareta* is the past form of *dete korareru*, a PL4 honorific form of *dete kuru* (“come out”). From the perspective of the city, *dete kuru* is used to speak of someone traveling from the country to the city; in the case of Tokyo, “country” includes any regional city.

5

**Yamamoto:** 昨日 です。 今日 は 是非 隆介さん を 説得しよう と 思いまして。

*Kinō desu. Kyō wa zehi Ryūsuke-san o settoku shiyō to omoimashite.*  
 yesterday is today as for by all means (name-hon.) (obj.) shall persuade (quote) think/thought

**“Yesterday. And today I intend to persuade you no matter what it takes.” (PL3)**

- *settoku shiyō* is the volitional (“let’s/I shall”) form of *settoku suru* (“persuade”).
- *to* marks *zehi Ryūsuke-san o settoku shiyō* as the specific content of his thoughts.
- *omoimashite* is the *-te* form of *omoimasu*, the PL3 form of *omou* (“think”). The *-te* form is again used to indicate a reason—his reason for asking Kaji to see him.

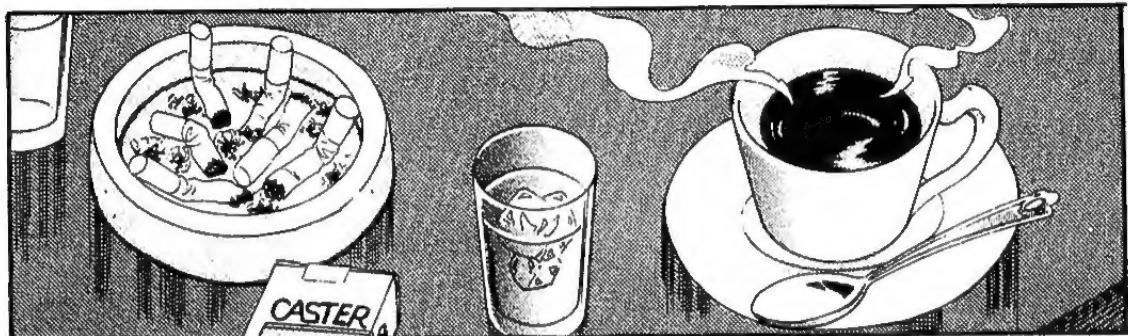
6

**Kaji:** おっと、 いきなり 不意打ち を くらわされました ね。 ハハハハ。

*Ootto, ikinari fuiuchi o kurawasaremashita ne. Ha ha ha ha.*  
 (interj.) suddenly/abruptly surprise attack (obj.) was fed/given (colloq.) (laugh)

**“Whoa, you hit me with a surprise punch right off the bat. Ha ha ha ha.” (PL3)**

- *otto* is an interjection used when a person is caught off guard and suddenly realizes he needs to be careful lest he make a mistake/put himself in danger/get in trouble.
- *fuiuchi* refers to a “surprise attack/ambush,” and *fuiuchi o kurau* (or *kuri*, literally “eat,” very informal) is an expression for “be ambushed” or “be attacked when one’s guard is down.” *Kurawasaremashita* is the PL3 past form of *kurawasareru*, the causative-passive form of *kurau*.



1 **Sound FX:** ズズ

Zu zu (sound of sipping coffee)

2 **Yamamoto:** お願ひ します よ! 次の 選挙 に は 是非 立候補して下さい!

O-negai shimasu yo! Tsugi no senkyo ni wa zehi rikkōho shite kudasai!  
(hon.)-request make (emph.) next election in as for by all means stand as candidate-(request)  
“Please, I’m begging you, you really must run in the next election!” (PL3)

隆介さん が 立たなければ 30年間 維持してきた 加治元春 の 地盤 は 崩壊します。  
Ryūsuke-san ga tatanakereba sanjūnenkan iji shite kita Kaji Motoharu no jiban wa hōkai shimasu.  
(name-hon.) (subj.) if don’t stand/run 30 yr. period maintained-and-came (name) ‘s constituency as for will collapse  
“If you don’t run, the constituency cultivated by Kaji Motoharu over the last 30 years will disintegrate.”  
(PL3)

- *onegai* means “request” and adding *suru/shimasu* turns it into a verb, “make a request/ask a favor.” Unless another subject is specified, it is understood to be the speaker who is making the request, so the expression essentially serves as a polite and formal “please.”
- *rikkōho shite* is the *-te* form of *rikkōho suru*, literally “stand as a candidate” → “become a candidate/run for office.” *Kudasai* after the *-te* form of a verb makes a relatively polite request.
- as is often done in Japanese, he uses his listener’s name in a situation when an English speaker would use “you.”
- *tatanakereba* is a conditional “if” form of *tatsu*, negative of *tatsu* (“stand,” here referring to “standing” as a candidate → “if you don’t run.”)
- *iji shite* is the *-te* form of *iji suru* (“maintain/sustain/keep up”), and *kita* is the plain/abrupt past form of *kuru* (“come”), which after the *-te* form of a verb often implies the action continued from sometime in the past until the present. *Sanjūnenkan iji shite kita* is a complete thought/sentence (“[we] have sustained [it] for a 30-year period”) modifying *Kaji Motoharu no jiban* (“Kaji Motoharu’s constituency”).
- *hōkai shimasu* is the PL3 form of *hōkai suru* (“collapse/disintegrate”).

3 **Kaji:** 私 は 自分 が 政治 に 向いて いる と は 思えません。

Watashi wa jibun ga seiji ni muite iru to wa omoemasen.  
I/me as for self (subj.) politics for is/am suited (quote)(emph.) cannot think/believe  
“I can’t believe that I am suited to politics.”

“I just don’t think of myself as suited to politics.” (PL3)

- *jibun* = “oneself,” and it becomes “I/me/myself,” “he/him/himself,” “you/yourself,” etc., depending on the context.
- *muite iru* is from *muku* (“suit/be suited [to/for]”).
- *omoemasen* is the negative form of *omoeru* (“can think”), the potential form of *omou* (“think”).

4 **Yamamoto:** 向き 不向き なんて 本人 に も わから ない もん です よ。

Muki fumuki nante honnин ni mo wakaranai mon desu yo.  
suitability unsuitability something like the person himself to even can’t tell thing is (emph.)  
“Suitability is the kind of thing that a person can’t judge by himself.” (PL3)

私 自身 今 の 自分 の 職業 が 本當に 合って いる の か どう か  
Watashi jishin ima no jibun no shokugyō ga honō ni atte iru no ka dō ka  
I myself now of own occupation (subj.) truly fits/suits whether or not

50年 経つた 今 で も 疑問 なん だ。  
gojūnen tatta ima demo gimon na n da.  
50 yrs have passed even at present doubtful (explan.)

“I have my own doubts whether or not my occupation truly suits me—even now after 50 years.” (PL2)

- *muki* is a noun form of *muku*, so it means “suitability,” and *fumuki* is its opposite, “unsuitability.”
- *nante* is a colloquial equivalent of *nado*, literally “things like/something like.”
- *wakaranai* is the negative form of *wakaru*, which can mean either “understand/come to understand,” or “can understand/tell.”
- *jishin* (“self/oneself”) is commonly used in combination with personal pronouns and nouns: *watashi/boku/ore jishin* = “I myself,” *kare jishin* = “he himself,” *Yamada-san jishin* = “Ms. Yamada herself.”
- *atte iru* is from *au* (“fit/suit/match”), and *(no) ka dō ka* after a complete thought/sentence means “whether or not [the described situation exists/action takes place].”

5 **Yamamoto:** 隆介さん! 今や 堀村 内閣 は 内外の 状況 から みて どうも 危ない。

Ryūsuke-san! Imaya Hatomura Naikaku wa naigai no jōkyō kara mite dōmo abunai.  
(name-hon.) now-(emph.) (name) cabinet/gov’t as for internal & external circumstances from looking (emph.) precarious/unsteady  
“Ryūsuke! Based on what I see going on both inside and outside the government, the Hatomura Cabinet is looking increasingly vulnerable.” (PL2)

このままで いけば 秋 に は 解散 総選挙 で しょ う。  
Kono mama de ikeba aki ni wa kaisan sōsenkyō deshō.  
as is (means) if go autumn in as for dissolution general election is probably

“At this rate, in the fall we will probably have dissolution [of the Diet] and a general election.”

“At this rate, the prime minister will probably dissolve the Diet and call a general election this fall.”  
(PL3)

- ~ *kara mite* (lit., “looking from”) is an expression for “judging from/based on ~.”
- *kono mama* = “unchanged from this,” and *ikeba* is a conditional (“if/when”) form of *iku* (“go/progress”), so *kono mama de ikeba* is literally “if things go on like this” → “at this rate.”



1 Yamamoto: その 時 を にらんで 今 から 準備 を しなければ 遅い んです。  
Sono toki o nirande ima kara junbi o shinakereba osoi n desu.  
that time (obj.) setting sights on now from preparations (obj.) if don't do/make is/will be too late (explan.)  
**"If we don't look ahead to that time and begin making preparations now, it'll be too late."** (PL3)

Yamamoto: 勝手な 頼い ですが 明日 に でも 辞表 を 提出して 鹿児島 に 戻って 来ていただきたい!  
Katte na negai desu ga, asu ni demo jihyō o teishutsu shite Kagoshima ni modotte kite itadakitai!  
selfish request is but tomorrow on even resignation (obj.) submit-and (place name) to want you to return-and-come  
"It is a selfish request but, even as early as tomorrow, I want you to submit your resignation and return to Kagoshima."

**"Perhaps it is presumptuous of me, but I want to ask you to submit your resignation and return to Kagoshima immediately."** (PL2)

- *nirande* is the *-te* form of *niramu* ("stare [at]/fix one's eyes [on]").
- *shinakereba* is a conditional ("if/when") form of *shinai*, negative of *suru* ("do/make"); *junbi o suru* = "make preparations/prepare."
- *asu ni demo* is an expression for "immediately/as soon as possible" (where the frame of reference is days/weeks/months rather than hours or minutes).
- *teishutsu shite* is the *-te* form of *teishutsu suru* ("submit"); the *-te* form here implies "[do the action] and ~"
- *modotte kite* is the *-te* form of *modotte kuru* ("return/come back"), and *itadakitai* after the *-te* form of a verb implies the speaker wants the listener or someone else to do the action.

2 Yamamoto: 隆介さん の 出馬 挨拶 の パーティー は いつでも<sup>1</sup>  
Ryūsuke-san no shutuba aisatsu no pātī wa itsu demo  
(name-hon.) 's candidacy announcement for party as for anytime  
開ける よう 態勢 は 整えてあります から。  
hirakeru yō taisei wa totonoete arimasu kara.  
can open/hold so that readiness as for has been established because  
**"We've already laid the groundwork so we can hold a party to announce your candidacy at any time."**  
(PL3)

- *shutuba suru* means "run for election," and *shutuba aisatsu* refers to "announcement of one's candidacy."
- *hirakeru* is the potential ("can/be able to") form of *hiraku* ("open," or when speaking of an event, "hold/commence"); *hirakeru yō (ni)* = "so that [we] can hold."
- *taisei* refers to "readiness," and *taisei o totonoeru* means "arrange/establish a state of readiness [to carry out the described action]." *Totonotoe* is the *-te* form of *totonoeru*, and *arimasu* (PL3 form of *aru*) after the *-te* form of a verb implies the action was done and the result remains in place, so in this case it means a state of readiness has been established and remains in place/on standby.

3 Kaji: いや...  
Iya...  
(interj.)  
**"Well..."** (PL2)

- *iya* can mean "no," but it's also used as a kind of warm-up/hesitation word ("well/er/uhh/I mean") with little or no feeling of negation, and that is how it's being used here. Though Yamamoto doesn't allow him to go on, Kaji is probably about to express hesitation rather than disagreement.

4 Yamamoto: 実 は あなたに お見せしたい もの が あります。  
Jitsu wa anata ni o-mise shitai mono ga arimasu.  
fact/truth as for you to (hon.)-want to show thing (subj.) have  
**"Actually, I have something I'd like to show you."** (PL4)

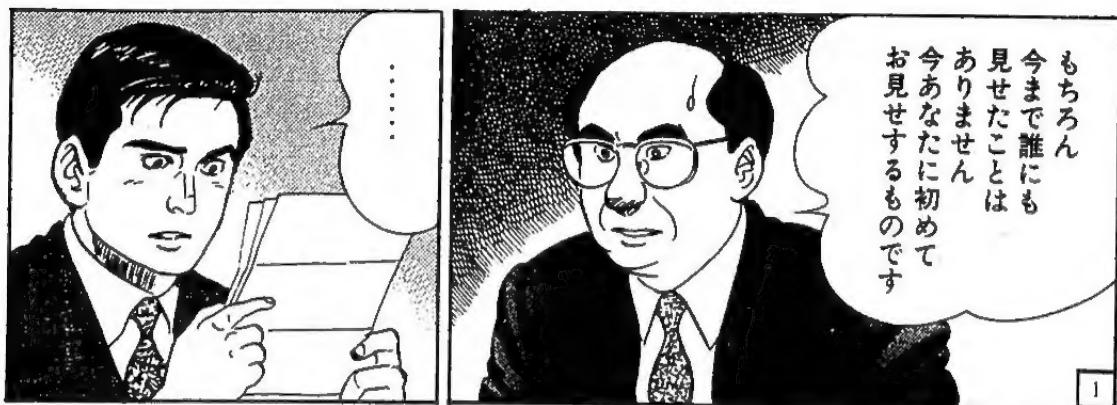
- *o-mise shitai* is the "want to" form of *o-mise suru*, a PL4 humble equivalent of *miseru* ("show"). *Anata ni o-mise shitai* is a complete thought/sentence ("[I] want to show [it] to you") modifying *mono* ("thing").
- *arimasu* is the PL3 form of *aru* ("exists" for inanimate things, often implying "exists in one's possession" → "[I] have").

5 Yamamoto: 20年前に あなたの お父上 加治 元春 先生 が 私宛に 出された 手紙 です。  
Nijūnen-mae ni anata no o-chichie Kaji Motoharu -sensei ga watashi-ate ni dasareta tegami desu.  
20 yrs. ago your (hon.)-father (surname)(given name) (title) (subj.) addressed to me sent letter is  
**"It's a letter your father, the Honorable Kaji Motoharu, sent to me 20 years ago."** (PL4)

Letter: 鹿児島(市)... 山本 真喜雄(様)  
(partly hidden) Kagoshima (-shi)... Yamamoto Makio(-sama)  
(city name) (surname) (given name-hon.)  
**Kagoshima City ... Mr. Yamamoto Makio**

Stamp: 日本 郵便  
Nippon Yūbin  
Japan mail  
**Japan Postal Service**

- *chichie* is a polite and formal word for "father"; using the honorific prefix makes it even more polite.
- *sensei*, most familiar as the word for "teacher," is also used as a respectful title for a variety of people considered worthy of respect, including doctors, writers, and politicians.
- a personal pronoun or name followed by *-ate* means "addressed to [the stated person]."
- *dasareta* is the plain/abrupt past form of *dasareru*, a PL4 honorific form of the verb *dasu* ("put out," or when speaking of letters and other mail items, "send").
- *nijūnen-mae ni anata no o-chichie Kaji Motoharu-sensei ga watashi-ate ni dasareta* is a complete thought/sentence ("Your father, the honorable Kaji Motoharu, sent [it] to me 20 years ago") modifying *tegami* ("letter").



1



2



3

1 Yamamoto: もちろん 今まで 誰にも 見せたことはありません。

Mochiron ima made dare ni mo miseta koto wa arimasen.  
of course now until [not] to anyone showed have never

“It goes without saying that I’ve never shown it to anyone until now.” (PL3)

Yamamoto: 今、あなたに 初めて お見せる ものです。

Ima, anata ni hajimete o-mise suru mono desu.

now you to for first time (hon.)-show thing is

“It is something I’m showing you for the first time now.”

“Here and now, you’re the first person I’ve shown it to.” (PL3)

- *mochiron* is an adverb implying “of course/naturally/without question/needless to say.”

- *dare mo* is followed by a negative to mean “not anyone/no one”; inserting *ni* makes it “not to anyone.”

- *miseta* is the plain/abrupt past form of *miseru* (“show”); *o-mise suru* is a PL4 humble form of the same verb.

- *koto wa arimasen* is the PL3 form of *koto wa* (or *ga*) *nai*, which after a past verb means “have never [done the action].”

2 Yamamoto: その 内容 は 錦江 クラブ 発足 にあたって 私 に

Sono naiyō wa Nishikie Kurabu hossoku ni atatte watashi ni

of that contents as for (name) club inauguration at the time of I/me to

いろいろと 指示なさって 下さった もの です が、

iroiro to shiji nasante kudasatta mono desu ga,

variously instructed me things is but

Yamamoto: 最後の 追伸 の ところ を よく 読んで 下さい。

saigo no tsuushin no tokoro o yoku yonde kudasai.

end at postscript that is place (obj.) well/carefully please read

“The contents are various things he instructed me at the time of the inauguration of the Nishikie Club, but please read carefully the postscript at the end.”

“It contains various instructions he had for me when the Nishikie Club was launched, but let me draw your attention particularly to the postscript at the end.” (PL4)

- ~ *ni atatte* means “at the time of/in conjunction with” an action or event.

- *iroiro* is an adverb form of *iroiro*, a noun meaning “various items/things/kinds.”

- *shiji nasante* is the *-te* form of *shiji nasaru*, a PL4 honorific equivalent of *shiji suru* (“instruct/direct”). *Kudasatta* (the plain/abrupt past form of *kudasaru*) after the *-te* form of a verb typically implies the action was done to or for the speaker by someone of higher social status → “instructed me.”

- *tsuushin no tokoro* is literally “the place that is the postscript” → “the postscript.”

- *yoku*, the adverb form of *ii/yo!* (“good/fine/OK”), often means “carefully/thoroughly.”

- *yonde* is the *-te* form of *yomu* (“read”), and *kudasai* after the *-te* form of a verb makes a relatively polite request.

3 Letter: 追伸 先日 次男 の 隆介 が 東大 文I に 合格した。

Tsuushin Senjitsu jinan no Ryūsuke ga Tōdai Bun-ichi ni gōkaku shita.

postscript the other day second son who is (name) (subj.) Univ. of Tokyo Humanities I to/by passed/was accepted

PS: The other day my second son, Ryūsuke, passed the entrance exam for the University of Tokyo Faculty of Letters I. (PL2)

長男 春彦 合格 の 時 より 数倍 嬉しい 気持ち だ。

Chōnan Haruhiko gōkaku no toki yori sūbai ureshii kimochi da.

eldest son (name) passed/accepted (mod.) time more than several fold happy/joyful feeling is

My joy is several times what I experienced when my first son Haruhiko passed the exam. (PL2)

- *senjitsu* refers to a relatively recent date, ranging from a few days ago to as much as several weeks.

- *chōnan* (lit. “head boy”) refers to a “first-born son,” and *jinan* (lit. “next boy”) means “second son.” Subsequent boys are simply numbered: *sannan* (“third son”), *yonnan* (“fourth son”), etc. The same pattern is used for girls: *chōjo* (“head girl”) → “first daughter”, *jijo* (“next girl”) → “second daughter”), *sanjo* (“third daughter”), etc. The last child of either sex is called *suekko* (lit. “end child” → “youngest child”).

- *Tōdai* is an abbreviation of *Tōkyō Daigaku* (“University of Tokyo”), and *Bun I* is an abbreviation of *Bunka Ichirui* (文科I類, “Human Sciences I”). The University of Tokyo is regarded as being at the very top of the higher-education hierarchy in Japan and is the most difficult university to get into.

- *gōkaku* is a noun that refers to meeting a standard or passing an eligibility screen of some kind, and *gōkaku shita* is the plain/abrupt past form of the verb *gōkaku suru*. In the case of schools and colleges, it means to pass the entrance exam and be accepted for admission.

- *yori* follows the lesser item in a comparison: “more than [the time when ~].”

- *sū-* is a prefix meaning “several,” and *-bai* is a counter suffix for multiples, so *sūbai* = “several times/several fold.” *Bai* by itself always means *nibai* = “two times/double”; *sanbai* = “three times/triple,” *yonbai* = “four times/quadruple,” *gobai* = “five times,” etc.



**Letter:** なぜなら、隆介は長男 春彦よりずっと出来が悪かったからだ。

*Naze nara, Ryūsuke wa chōnan Haruhiko yori zutto deki ga warukatta kara da.  
because (name) as for eldest son (name) more than much more had poor results because is*

**The reason is that Ryūsuke always did much worse [in school] than my eldest son Haruhiko. (PL2)**

自分で言うのもおかしいが、春彦はラサール時代の6年間、  
*Jibun de iu no mo okashii ga, Haruhiko wa Rasāru jidai no roku nenkan,*  
oneself by say (nom.) (emph.) odd but (name) as for (sch. name) era of 6 yr. per.

常にトップクラスにいた秀才だった。  
*tsune ni toppu kurasu ni ita shūsai datta.*  
always top class at existed bright/talented person was

**Haruhiko was an excellent student, if I do say so myself—always at the top of his class during his six years at La Salle. (PL2)**

- *naze nara* (or *naze narabu*) signals that the speaker or writer is about to offer an explanation of what he has just said. As in this case, it's usually echoed at the end of the clause or sentence with *kara, node*, or another explanatory form. It's used mostly in written Japanese, and sounds a little stiff in colloquial speech.
- *deki* refers to how well made something is or how good the results are, and *deki ga warukatta* is the plain/abrupt past form of the expression *deki ga warui* (lit., "the make/result is bad"); when speaking of students, the expression refers to "doing poorly/being a poor student."
- *jibun de iu no mo okashii* is literally "it is odd for me to say this myself"; the expression is used like "if I do say so myself" when making a self-satisfied remark about something connected with oneself.
- *Rasāru* refers to Kagoshima La Salle—a prep school famous for its graduates' success at getting into the University of Tokyo.
- *shūsai* refers to a person who outshines others in his class—though it may be as much from hard work as from native intelligence. In school, the key measure is top-notch grades → "a good/excellent student."

**Letter:** 一方、隆介はとくれば、中学生の頃は勉強もせず、

*Ippō, Ryūsuke wa to ieba, chūgakusei no koro wa benkyō mo sezu,*  
on the other hand (name) as for (quote) if say jr. high of period as for study even did not do

スポーツばかりやっていて、成績もクラスの中程度。

*supōtsu bakari yatte ite, seiseki mo kurasu no chū teido.*  
sports only was doing/playing grades too/also class of mid-level

On the other hand, if I speak of Ryūsuke, when he was in junior high he didn't even study and did only sports, and his grades were at the middle of the class.

**Ryūsuke, on the other hand, didn't even study when he was in junior high. He spent all his time playing sports, and his grades were only average. (PL2)**

**Letter:** まさか 東大にはいれるとは思ってもいなかった

*Masaka Tōdai ni haireru to wa omotte mo inakatta.*  
(emph.) Tokyo Univ. into could enter (quote) as for didn't think-(emph.)

**I never imagined he'd be able to get into the University of Tokyo. (PL2)**

- *benkyō sezu* is equivalent to *benkyō shinaide* ("without/instead of studying" or "didn't study, and ~"—from *benkyō suru*, "study"); inserting *mo* adds emphasis: "didn't even study and ~."
- *vatte* is the *-te* form of *yaru* ("do," or when speaking of sports, "play"), and *ite* is the *-te* form of *iru*, which makes the verb progressive ("is/was playing").

**Letter:** ところが 高校も3年になってやっと受験勉強らしきものを始めたと思つたら、

*Tokoro-ga kōkō mo sannen ni natte yatto juken benkyō rashiki mono o hajimeta to omottara,*  
but/however high school too senior became-and finally exam study like thing (obj.) began (quote) if/when thought

メキメキ 実力をつけていつも簡単に合格してしまった。

*meki-meki jitsuryoku o tsukete itomo kantan ni gōkaku shite shimatta.*  
more & more/rapidly ability (obj.) acquired-and exceedingly easily passed-(unexpected)

**But when he finally started studying for his college entrance exams upon becoming a senior in high school, he quickly developed his abilities and passed with complete ease. (PL2)**

**Letter:** 秀才で勉強の虫の兄貴とは我が家子ながら全然違うタイプなのだ。

*Shūsai de benkyō no mushi no aniki to wa waga koながら zenzen chigau taipu na no da.*  
good stud. is-and study of bug/worm who is older bro. with us for my children although are completely different type (explan.) Compared to his older brother, who was an excellent student and a bookworm, though both are my children, he's a completely different type.

**Though they're both my own sons, he's a completely different type from his older brother, who was such a good student and loved to study. (PL2)**

不思議な気がする。

*Fushigi na ki ga suru.*  
marvelous/amazing feels/seems

**It's quite amazing to me. (PL2)**

- *tokoro-ga* is a conjunction that implies something is contrary to the expectations raised by what precedes it: "but/however/nevertheless/on the contrary."
- ~ *rashiki mono* = "something like/akin to ~"; the feeling here is that even when he started studying, he didn't really have to study all that hard. Ryūsuke's middling grades disqualify him from being called *shūsai*, but his native intelligence is clearly above that of his older brother.
- *hajimeta* is the plain/abrupt past form of *hajimeru* ("begin"); a past verb followed by *to omottara* can idiomatically mean "as soon as [the action took place]."

(continued on next page)



隆介の持つ合理的な性格および実行力」こそ  
「これから日本の政治家にとって  
欠くべからざる要素なのだ



3 (continued from previous page)

- *mushi* means “bug/insect,” and it’s used much the way “worm” is used in “bookworm” to mean “one who loves to read books”; *benkyō no mushi* is literally “study worm” → “one who loves to study.”
- *fushigi na* = “wonderful/marvelous/mysterious/amazing/magical,” and *~ ki ga suru* implies that’s how he feels or that’s how the situation seems.

4

**Letter:** この二人が将来どういう道を歩むかわからないが、  
*Kono futari ga shōrai dō iu michi o ayumu ka wakaranai ga,*  
these 2-people (subj.) in future what kind of path (obj.) will walk (?) don’t know but  
子供の頃からの二人を見る限りでは、  
*kodomo no koro kara no futari o miru kagiri de wa,*  
childhood from 2-people (obj.) see/watch limit if it is

**Letter:** 春彦は官僚タイプで隆介は政治家タイプだとと思う。  
*Haruhiko wa kanryō taipu de Ryūsuke wa seiji-ka taipu da to omou.*  
(name) as for bureaucrat type is-and (name) as for politician type is (quote) think

I don’t know what paths these two will tread in the future, but from what I’ve seen of them during their childhoods, I’d say Haruhiko is the bureaucratic type while Ryūsuke will make a better politician. (PL2)

- *wakaranai* is the negative form of *wakaru* (“come to know”). A question ending in *ka* followed by *wakaranai* essentially makes an indirect question, “I don’t know who/when/where/what kind of ~.”
- *koro* (or *goro*) typically refers to an approximate point in time, but it can also refer to a general period of time: *kodomo no koro* = “the period when one was a child” → “one’s childhood.”
- *~ kagiri de wa* (lit. “if it is within the limit of ~”) after a verb makes an idiomatic expression for “so far as one can tell/say from [doing the action].”

1

**Letter:** もし私の跡を継いでくれるとしたら断然隆介にやらせたい。  
*Moshi watashi no ato o tsuide kureru to shitara danzen Ryūsuke ni yarasetai.*  
if I/me of tracks (obj.) follow-(for me) by far/decidedly (name) by want to have do

If [one of them] is to follow in my footsteps, without question I would prefer it to be Ryūsuke. (PL2)

**Letter:** 隆介の持つ合理的性格および実行力こそこれから日本の政治家にとって欠くべからざる要素なのだ。  
*Ryūsuke no motsu gōri-teki seikaku oyobi jikkōryoku koso kore kara no Nihon no seiji-ka ni totte kaku bekarazaru yōso na no da.*  
(name) (subj.) holds/has rational/pragmatic quality/character together with powers of execution (emph.) from now of Japan's politicians to/for essential/indispensable elements/traits (explan.-is)

The pragmatic qualities Ryūsuke has, together with his ability to get things done, are indispensable qualities for Japan’s politicians from this time forward.”

**The pragmatic, man-of-action qualities that Ryūsuke has are precisely the qualities that will be essential in Japan’s future politicians. (PL2)**

- *Ryūsuke no motsu* is a complete thought/sentence (“Ryūsuke has [it]”) modifying *gōri-teki seikaku* (“pragmatic quality/character”) as well as *jikkōryoku* (“power of execution/ability to get things done”). *No* substitutes for *ga* to mark *Ryūsuke* as the subject of *motsu*, as it often does in modifying clauses.
- *koso* emphasizes what comes before it with the feeling of “none other than that/that very thing [is ~].”
- *kore kara* is literally “from this,” meaning “from this time forward” → “from now (on)/(in)the future.” *No* makes it a modifier for *Nihon no seiji-ka* (“Japan’s politicians”) → “Japan’s future politicians.”
- *kaku* is a verb meaning “lack/be wanting,” and *bekarazaru* is an archaic “must not” form, now used mostly only in formal writing, so *kaku bekarazaru* = “must not be lacking” → “is indispensable/essential.”
- *kore kara no Nihon no seiji-ka ni totte kaku bekarazaru* is a complete thought/sentence (“[they] are indispensable to Japan’s future politicians”) modifying *yōso* (“elements/traits”).

2

**Yamamoto:** 加治先生は20年前にすでにあなたのことをそう考えておられたのです。

*Kaji-sensei wa nijūnen-mae ni sude-ni anata no koto o sō kangaete orareta no desu.*  
(name-title) as for 20 yrs. ago already you about (obj.) that way was thinking (explan.)  
“Twenty years ago, your father was already thinking of you in this way.” (PL4)

- *~ no koto* is literally “things of/about ~,” or simply “of/about ~.”
- *kangaete orareta* is the past form of *kangaete orareru*, a PL4 honorific equivalent of *kangaete iru* (“is thinking”), from *kangaeru* (“think”).

3

**Kaji:** 知らなかつた。

*Shiranakatta.*  
didn’t know

**“I had no idea.” (PL2)**

• *shiranakatta* is the plain/abrupt past form of *shiru* (“come to know”).

4

**Yamamoto:** 隆介さん、ご決断下さい

*Ryūsuke-san, go-ketsudan kudasai.*  
(name-hon.) (hon.-)decision please

**“Ryūsuke, please make your decision.” (PL4)**

**Yamamoto:** 死き父上の遺志を継いで日本の為に政治の道を選んで下さい。

*Naki chichiue no ishi o tsuide Nihon no tame ni seiji no michi o erande kudasai.*  
deceased father 's dying wish (obj.) carry on/follow-and Japan 's sake for politics of path (obj.) please choose  
“Please follow your father’s dying wish and, for the sake of Japan, choose the path of politics.”

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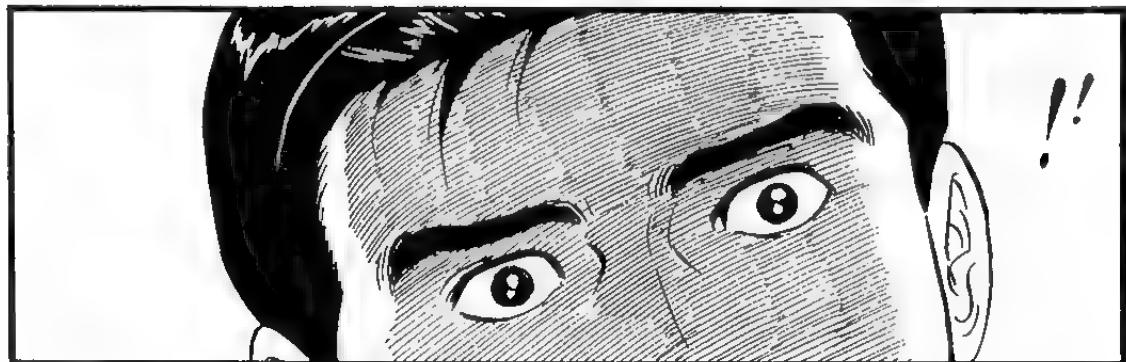
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3



6

5



4 (continued from previous page)

**“For the greater good of Japan, please follow your father’s dying wish and choose the path of politics.” (PL3)**

- *go-ketsudan kudasai* is a PL4 honorific equivalent of *ketsudan shite kudasai* (“please decide”), from *ketsudan suru* (“decide”). The honorific prefix *go-* (or *o-*, depending on the word) plus the stem of a verb plus *kudasai* makes a PL4 honorific request.
- *naki* is a modifying form of *nakunaru* (“die”).
- *tsuide* is the *-te* form of *tsugu* (“carry on/follow [a wish]”).
- *erande* is the *-te* form of *erabu* (“choose/select”), and *kudasai* after the *-te* form of a verb makes a relatively polite request.

1

**Kaji:** 少し 時間を 下さい。

*Sukoshi jikan o kudasai.*  
a little time (obj.) please give me

“Please give me a little time.”

“I’ll need some time to think it over.” (PL3)

**Kaji:** 私の人生のことですから、今ここで即断することは出来ない。

*Watashi no jinsei no koto desu kara, ima koko de sokudan suru koto wa dekinai.*  
I/me 's life about is because/so now here at immediately decide thing as for cannot do

“This is about my life, so I cannot decide here and now.”

“This will affect the rest of my life, so I can’t make a snap decision right here and now.” (PL2-3)

- *sokudan* refers to an “instant/immediate/on-the-spot decision,” and *sokudan suru* is its verb form.
- *koto wa dekinai* after the plain, non-past form of a verb makes a negative potential (“cannot”) form of the verb.

2

**Yamamoto:** わかりました。私の伝えたいことはそれだけです。

*Wakarimashita. Watashi no tsutaetai koto wa sore dake desu.*  
understood I/me (subj.) want to tell thing as for that only is

“I understand. What I wanted to tell you is only that.”

“Certainly. That’s all I wanted to say to you.” (PL3)

- *wakarimashita* is the PL3 past form of *wakaru*, “come to know/understand.” The word is often used to show acceptance of what the other person has said/asked: “yes/OK/certainly/that’ll be fine.”
- *tsutaetai* is the “want to” form of *tsutaeru* (“tell/convey information [to]”); *watashi no tsutaetai* is a complete thought/sentence (“I want to convey [it]”) modifying *koto* (“thing”).

3

**Sound FX:** カッコッカッ

*Ka kko kka*

Click click click (sound of heels clicking against floor)

4

**Yamamoto:** あ、それから...

*A, sorekara...*

(interj.) and

“Oh, and one other thing...”

- *a* is an interjection used when suddenly noticing or remembering something.

5

**Kaji:** はい?

*Hai?*

yes

“Yes?” (PL3)

6

**Yamamoto:** 老婆心ながら、身辺はきれいになさっておいて下さい。

*rōbashin nagara, shinpen wa kirei ni nasatte oite kudasai.*  
grandmotherly although it is personal affairs as for make clean-(ahead) please

“Although it is grandmotherly of me [to say this], please tidy up your personal affairs.”

“This may sound overly solicitous, but please make sure your personal affairs are in good order.” (PL4)

**Yamamoto:** 将来のためです

*Shōrai no tame desu.*

future for the good/benefit of is

“For the good of your future.”

“It will be for your own good in the future.” (PL3)

- *rōbashin* is written with kanji meaning “the heart of a grandmother,” and refers to being “grandmotherly” and showing excessive solicitude.
- *nagara* is often used to link two actions that occur simultaneously, but it can also be used to mean “although” or “although it is ~.”
- *kirei ni* is an adverb form of *kirei na* (“beautiful/clean”), and *nasatte* is the *-te* form of *nasaru*, a PL4 honorific equivalent of *suru* (“do/make”); *kirei ni nasaru = kirei ni suru* = “make[something] clean” → “tidy [something] up.”
- *oite* is the *-te* form of *oku*, which after the *-te* form of a verb implies the action is done now/ahead of time in preparation for some future need, and *kudasai* after the *-te* form of a verb makes a polite request, so *kirei ni nasatte oite kudasai* altogether becomes “please go ahead and tidy [something] up now.”
- *no tame* often means “for the purpose of,” but here it means “for the good/benefit of.”



1 **Narration:** 衆議院 議員 会館  
*Shūgiin* *Giin* *Kaikan*  
House of Reps. representative hall/building  
**House of Representatives Office Building**

- *Shūgiin* ("House of Representatives") refers to the lower house of Japan's legislature, the national Diet. The *Shūgiin* has 512 members elected to 4-year terms—except that the House may be dissolved for a new election before the full term is up. Though the Diet also has an upper house (*Sangiin*, "the House of Councillors"), it is the *Shūgiin* that predominates in selecting the prime minister as well as in legislation and budget.
- 議員 *giin* basically means "assembly member," so it is used for both representatives and councillors (with the appropriate modifier when necessary), as well as for legislators at other levels of government.

2 **Narration:** 民上政和党 幹事長 鈴鹿 宏  
*Minshu Seiwa-tō* *kanjichō*, *Suzuka Hiroshi*  
(party name)-party secretary-general (surname)(given name)  
**Suzuka Hiroshi, Secretary-General of the Democratic Harmony Party**

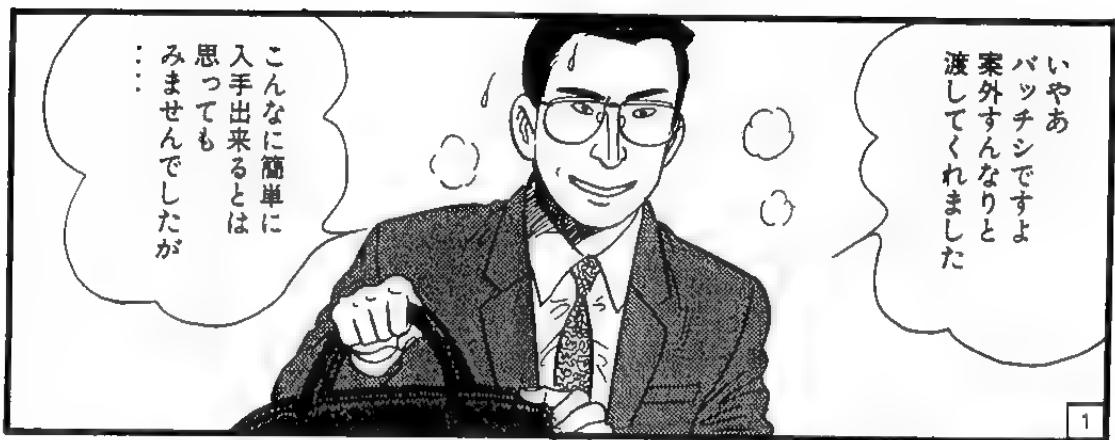
- *Minshu Seiwa-tō* is a fictitious political party modeled on the *Jiyū Minshu-tō* (自由民主党, "Liberal Democratic Party"). Later in the story, the party name is abbreviated *Minsei-tō*, taking its first and third kanji, just as *Jiyū Minshu-tō* is more commonly known as *Jimin-tō*.
- in some parties the secretary-general is called *shokichō* instead of *kanjichō*.

3 **Chief of Staff:** 鈴鹿先生、 アメリカ に 行っていた 森本君 が 帰ってきました。  
*Suzuka-sensei, Amerika ni itte ita Morimoto-kun ga kaette kimashita.*  
(name-title.) America/USA to had gone (name-fam.) (subj.) came home  
"Sir, Morimoto has returned from his trip to America." (PL3)

- Japanese speakers often address their superiors by name plus title when an English speaker would say "Mr./Ms. ~" or simply "sir/ma'am."
- *itte ita* ("had gone") is the plain/abrupt past form of *itte iru* ("has gone"), from *iku* ("go").
- *Amerika ni itte ita* is a complete thought/sentence ("[he] had gone to America") modifying *Morimoto-kun*.
- *-kun* is a more familiar equivalent of *-san* ("Mr./Ms."), used mainly with male peers or subordinates.
- *kaette* is the *-te* form of *kaeru* ("go/come home"), and *kimashita* is the PL3 past form of *kuru* ("come"), which clarifies that the meaning is "come home" instead of "go home."

4 **Suzuka:** おう！ 呼んでくれ。  
*ō!* *Yonde kure.*  
(exclam.) call-(request)  
"All right! Call him in."  
**"All right! Have him come in."** (PL2)

- *ō* is an exclamation of approval/delight.
- *yonde* is the *-te* form of *yobu* ("call/summon"), and *kure* after the *-te* form of a verb makes a relatively abrupt request or gentle command.



1 **Morimoto:** いやあ、バッヂシ です よ。 案外 すんなりと 渡してくれました。  
Iyā, batchishi desu yo. *Angai sunnari to watashite kuremashita.*  
(interj.) piece of cake is/was (emph.) unexpectedly/surprisingly smoothly/easily handed/gave to me  
“Man, it was a piece of cake. They gave it to me with less fuss than I expected.” (PL3)

**Morimoto:** こんなに 簡単に 入手出来る と は 思ってもみませんでした が...  
Konna-ni kantan ni nyūshū dekiru to wa omotte mo mimasen deshita ga...  
this much easily could obtain/acquire (quote) as for did not even try thinking but  
“I never imagined it would be so easy to get hold of, but...” (PL3)

- *iyā* is an interjection that gives exclamatory emphasis when expressing delight/pleasure.
- *batchishi* is a variant of *batchiri*, a colloquialism meaning that something is or turned out “just right/exactly as desired/a complete success,” often with the additional feeling of “a cinch/piece of cake.”
- *sunnari* (with or without a following *to*) is an adverb meaning “easily/smoothly/without resistance.”
- *watashite* is the *-te* form of *watasu* (“hand over/deliver/give”), and *kuremashita* is the PL3 past form of *kureru*, which after the *-te* form of a verb implies the action was done to or for the speaker or subject.
- *nyūshū dekiru* is the potential (“can/be able to”) form of *nyūshū suru* (“obtain/acquire”).
- *omotte* is the *-te* form of *omou* (“think”), and *mimasen deshita* is the PL3 past form of *minai*, negative of *miru* (“see”). *Miru* after the *-te* form of a verb implies “try [doing the action]” or “[do the action] and see,” and inserting *mo* between *-te* and *miru* adds emphasis: *omotte mo mimasen deshita* = “did not even try thinking” → “never imagined/dreamed.” *To* marks *konna-ni kantan ni nyūshū dekiru* as the specific content of what he never imagined.

2 **Morimoto:** これ が 大久保 文部大臣 の 問題 発言 の 盗聴 テープ です。  
kore ga Ōkubo Monbu Daijin no mondai hatsugen no tōchō tēpu desu.  
this (subj.) (name) Min. of Education 's problematic statement of wiretapping tape is  
“This is the wiretap tape of Education Minister Ōkubo’s gaffe.” (PL3)

**Sound FX:** コトッ  
*Koto!*  
(light “tap” of setting cassette tape on desk)

- *Monbushō* = “Ministry of Education” (equivalent to the US Department of Education), and *Monbu Daijin* refers to its top official, “Minister of Education” (equivalent to the US Secretary of Education).
- *tōchō* is written with kanji meaning “steal” and “listen” and can refer to direct eavesdropping as well as to bugging/wiretapping; its verb form is *tōchō suru*.
- earlier in the story, Minister Ōkubo made a private remark about agricultural goods in the US being cheap because slavery is still practiced there in the South

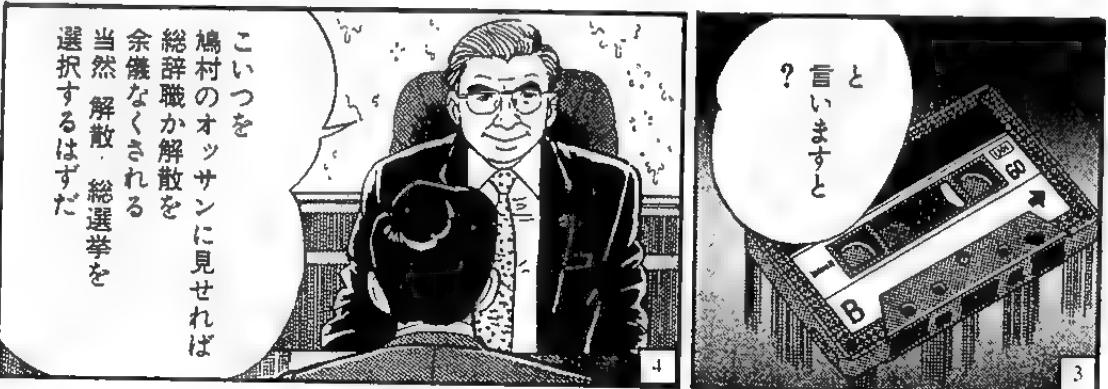
3 **Suzuka:** これ 1個 が 50万ドル か。 安い もん だ な。  
Kore ikko ga gojūman-doru ka. Yasui mon da na.  
this 1-item (subj.) \$500,000 (?) cheap/inexpensive thing is (colloq.)  
“This one item was \$500,000, was it? It’s an inexpensive thing, isn’t it?”  
“So this one tape cost \$500,000, did it? I’d call that a bargain.” (PL2)

- *ka* literally makes it a question (“Is this one item \$500,000?”), but the question form is often used rhetorically when observing/confirming something for oneself, with the feeling of “So this is ~, is it?/I guess/it seems.”
- *yasui mon da* (lit. “it is a cheap thing”) is an idiomatic expression for “what a bargain!”

4 **Morimoto:** プレス・アトランタ なんてのは ただの 地方の ゴロツキ 新聞 です よ。  
Puresu Atoranta nante no wa tada no chihō no gorotsuki shinbun desu yo.  
(newspaper name) as for a mere regional racketeer newspaper is (emph.)  
“Press Atlanta is nothing but a hicktown racketeer newspaper.” (PL3)

**Morimoto:** 奴等 どうせ 初め っから 金 が 目的だった ん で し ょ う。  
Yatsu-ra dōse hajime kkara kane ga mokuteki datta n deshō.  
those guys anyway the start from money (subj.) was aim (explan.) probably  
“It’s probably that from the beginning money was their aim anyway.”  
“They were probably just after the money from the start.” (PL3)

- *nante* is a colloquial *nado* (“a thing like”), and *nante no wa* is a colloquial contraction of *nado to iu no wa* (lit., “as for a thing that is like ~”), an expression often used to belittle the preceding.
- *chihō* = “outlying regions” and *chihō no* = “regional.” *Chihō* usually includes all parts of a country other than the national capital, and the word often carries a derogatory note based on the presumption that all things outside the central capital are somehow inferior.
- *gorotsuki* = “hoodlum/thug/ruffian” or “extortionist/blackmailer.”
- *yatsu* is an informal/rough word for “fellow/guy,” and *-ra* makes it plural → *yatsu-ra* = “they/them/those guys.” The word carries a tone of derision here, as *yatsu* often does.
- *dōse* implies there is a predictability or inevitability about the conclusion that’s being drawn.
- *hajime kkara* is an emphatic colloquial variation of *hajime kara* (“from the beginning”).
- *n* is a contraction of the explanatory *no*, and *deshō* makes a conjecture, so *n deshō* can be literally thought of as “it’s probably that ~”



1 **Morimoto:** こっち が 買わなきや 日本 の マスコミ に 流す ところ だったらしい。  
*Kotchi ga kawanakya Nihon no masukomi ni nagasu tokoro datta rashii.*  
 this side/we(subj.) if didn't buy Japan 's mass media to leak place/situation was apparently  
**"They were apparently about to leak it to the Japanese media if we didn't buy it."** (PL2)

**Morimoto:** こいつ を 押された こと は 大きいです ね。  
*Koitsu o osaeta koto wa ōkii desu ne.*  
 this one/thing (obj.) took control/possession of thing/situation as for is big (colloq.)  
**"That we took possession of this thing is big."**  
**"Getting our hands on this is a big coup."** (PL3)

- *kotchi* ("this side/direction") is often used for referring to oneself or one's own group: "I/we."
- *kawanakya* is a contraction of *kawanakereba* ("if [we] don't/didn't buy [it]"; tense is determined at the end of the clause.)
- *tokoro datta* is the plain/abrupt past form of *tokoro da*, which after a verb can mean "be about to [do the action]."
- *osaeta* is the plain/abrupt past form of *osaeru* ("hold down/control" or "take into custody/possession").

2 **Suzuka:** 大きい な。 民政党 のため だけ ではなくて、我が 清池会 にとっても 非常に 大きい。  
*Ōkii na. Minsei-tō no tame dake de wa nakute, waga Seichikai ni tote mo hijō ni ōkii.*  
 is big (colloq.) (party name) for sake/good of only is not-and our (faction name) for also exceedingly is big  
**"It's big all right. Not only for the Democratic Harmony Party, but for our own Seichikai faction as well—very big."** (PL2)

- *no tame* = "for the sake/good/benefit of," and *dake de wa nakute* is a continuing form of *dake de wa nai* ("it is not only ~") → ~ *no tame dake de wa nakute* = "not only for the good of ~, but ..."

3 **Chief of Staff:** と 言いますと?  
*To timasu to?*  
 (quote) if/when you say  
**"In what way?"** (PL3)

- *timasu* is the PL3 form of *iu* ("say"), and *to* after a non-past verb can make a conditional ("if/when") meaning. *To iu to* or *to timasu to* as a response to what the other person has said essentially asks for further elaboration/clarification.

4 **Suzuka:** こいつ を 鳩村 の オッサン に 見せれば 総辞職 か 解散 を 余儀なくされる。  
*Koitsu o Hatomura no ossan ni misereba sōjishoku ka kaisan o yoginaku sareru.*  
 this thing (obj.) (name) who is uncle to if show general resignation or dissolution (obj.) will have no choice but to do  
**"If we show this to old man Hatomura, they'll either have to resign en masse or dissolve the House."** (PL2)

**Suzuka:** 当然、 解散 ～ 総選挙 を 選択する はず だ。  
*Tōzen, kaisan sōsenkyo o sentaku suru hazu da.*  
 of course/naturally dissolution general election (obj.) elect expectation is  
**"Naturally, we can expect them to choose to dissolve the House and hold a general election."** (PL2)

- *ossan* is a somewhat disrespectful way to refer to middle-aged and older men. It's a contraction of *ojisan*.
- *misereba* is a conditional ("if/when") form of *miseru* ("show").
- *sō-* is a prefix that implies everyone/everything/the totality is included in the event/action/item, and *jishoku* means "resignation from job/office," so *sōjishoku* refers to all of the members of a given group (presumably the cabinet in this case) resigning at the same time, and *sōsenkyo* refers to all of the seats in the House being contested at the same time.
- *yogi naku sareru* implies being forced to do something: "be obliged to do/have no choice but to do."
- *hazu* is a noun referring to "normal expectations"—the action someone should/ought to/will most likely take.

5 **Suzuka:** 解散 時期 の キャスティングボート は 我々 が 握った こと になる。  
*Kaisan jiki no kyasutingu bōto wa wareware ga nigitta koto ni naru.*  
 dissolution time of casting vote as for we (subj.) have grasped situation will become  
**"When that dissolution takes place, we will hold the swing votes."** (PL2)

**Suzuka:** "先んずれば 人 を 制す" だ。今のうちに 我が 派閥 の 代議士 は  
*"Sakinzureba hito o seisu" da. Ima no uchi ni waga habatsu no daigishi wa*  
 if precede people/others (obj.) control is immediately our faction of House members as for  
 全員 選挙区 へ 帰せ!  
*zen'in senkyo-ku e kaese!*  
 all members electoral district to return/send back  
 "It's 'He who goes first controls others.' Send all House members in our faction home to their electoral districts immediately!"  
**"As they say, 'First to move takes control.' Send all our faction members back to their home districts immediately!"** (PL2)

- *kyasutingu bōto* (or more properly *kyasutingu bōto*) is from the English "casting vote"—the deciding vote that the presiding officer casts to break a tie. In Japanese, the term is also used to refer to the votes a small faction holds that can swing the tally one way or the other → "swing vote."
- *sakinzureba* is a conditional ("if/when") form of *sakinzuru* (more commonly *sakinjiru*, "go ahead of [someone]"); *seisu* is an archaic form of *seisuru* ("suppress/control/dominate").
- *daigishi* usually refers only to members of the House of Representatives, not of the House of Councillors.
- *kaese* is the abrupt command form of *kaesu* ("return [something/someone]" or "take/send [someone/something] back.")

6 **Morimoto:** わかりました!  
*Wakarimashita!*  
 understood  
**"Yes sir!"** (PL3)

### SELECTED WORKS of ISHII HISAICHI

#### The lighter side of *ninja*

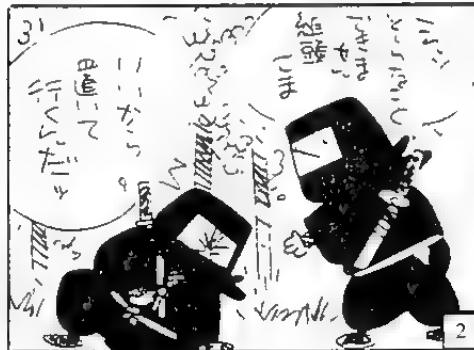
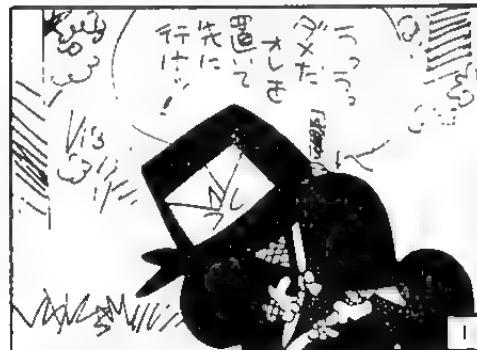
This issue's Ishii Hisaichi manga selections are taken from volume 27 of his "Action Comics Donuts Books" (subtitled "Ishii Hisaichi Senshū," which is what we call it in *Mangajin*). Many of the strips in this volume have to do with Japan's famed *ninja* warriors.

*Ninja* (忍者) are the fabled practitioners of *ninjutsu* (忍術), the art of stealth. (The "nin" in these words—忍—is the same kanji used in *shinobu*, "hide/lie hidden.") Employed by rival warlords in times of strife, the *ninja* specialized in spying, sabotage, and assassinations. Their training was intense—to avoid capture a *ninja* had to be both devious and physically fit. Different schools of *ninjutsu* developed over time, each with special tricks and gadgets used for escape or to avoid detection. One famous *ninja* technique was the *suiton no jutsu*, by which a spy could secretly cross a moat by submerging himself completely in the water, breathing through a pipe.

The warrior shown below is using a typical *ninja* tool, the *shukōkagi*, which was used for climbing walls. (Getting stepped on the head, however, was *not* a form of *ninjutsu*.)



Ninja warriors came from *ninja* families, found especially in the remote areas of Iga (now called Mie) and Kōga (now Shiga). The secrets of the art were taught from an early age and passed down over generations. Clad in black and working at night, real *ninja* were so skillful and mysterious that many Japanese believed there was magic involved in their feats.



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1

**Ninja A:** うっうっ、ダメ だ。オレ を 置いて 先 に行けッ!

*U! u!, dame da. Ore o oite saki ni ike!*

(groans) no good is me (obj.) leave-and ahead to go

**“Urgh! urgh! It’s no use. Go on ahead without me.”** (PL2)

- *dame (da/desu)* is often used as a prohibition, but it can also be used like this to mean a desired end cannot be achieved: “I can’t do it/it’s no use/it won’t work/etc.”
- *ore* is a rough, masculine word for “I/me.”
- *oite* is the *-te* form of *oku* (“set/leave in a place”), and *ike* is the abrupt command form of *iku* (“go”); *oite iku* means “leave [something/someone] and go” → “leave behind/go on without.”
- *saki ni iku* = “proceed first/go on ahead.”

2

**Ninja B:** えッ? そんな こと できまん、 紺頭さま、

*E?? Sonna koto dekimasen, kumigashira-sama.*

huh?/what? that kind of thing cannot do band/squad head/chief-(hon.)

**“What? I can’t do that, commander.”** (PL3)

**Ninja A:** いい から、 置いて 行くんだッ!

*ii kara, oite iku n da!*

is fine/OK because/so leave-and go (explan.)

“It’s OK, leave behind and go!”

**“It’s OK, go on ahead!”** (PL2)

- *wa*, to mark *sonna koto* as the topic, has been omitted, as it often is in colloquial speech.
- *dekimasen* is the PL3 negative form of *dekiru* (“can do”).
- *kumi* refers to an organized group of some kind (here the “company/troop/band” of *ninja*) and *-gashira* is from *kashira* (“head/chief/leader”), so for a paramilitary group like a band of *ninja*, *kumigashira* is like “commander.”
- *ii kara* (literally “because it’s OK/fine”) is an expression for “that’s OK/never mind.”
- following a plain, non-past verb with *n da* can serve as an abrupt command.

3

**Ninja B:** そなー! わたし の 弁当 を 置いて 行け だ な な て。

*Sonnā! Watashi no bentō o oite ike da nante.*

that kind of I/me 's lunch (obj.) leave-and go (quote)

**“That’s too much—telling me to go on ahead without my lunch.”** (PL3 implied)

**Ninja A:** バカ ヤロ。傷 が 深くて 動けない から オレ を 置いて 先 に行け と 言てる んだ!!  
*Baka yaro. Kizu ga fukakute ugokenai kara ore o oite saki ni ike to itteru n da!!*  
 idiot/fool guy wound(subj.) deep-(cause) can’t move because/so me (obj.) leave-and ahead to go (quote) am saying (explan.)  
 “Idiot. I’m saying leave me behind and go on ahead because I can’t move because my wound is deep.”  
**“Idiot! I’m telling you to go on ahead without me because I’m hurt too badly to go on.”** (PL2)

- *sonna* (lit. “that kind of”) can be used by itself as a generic exclamation of dismay/shock/protest.
- *da nante* is a colloquial quotative form that implies the situation is “unbelievable/unthinkable/out of the question.”
- the twist in this panel depends on the fact that the direct object does not have to be specified in Japanese—which allows the hungry Ninja B to hear Ninja A saying “leave it behind/go on without it” (it = lunch), instead of the intended “leave me behind/go on without me” in frame 2.
- *baka yaro* is a shortened *baka yarō* (lit. “fool/idiot” + “guy/fellow”), most typically directed at another person to mean “you fool/idiot/blockhead/etc.”
- *fukakute* is the *-te* form of *fukai* (“deep”); the *-te* form is being used to indicate the cause of what follows.
- *ugokenai* is the negative form of *ugokeru* (“can move”), potential form of *ugoku* (“move”).
- *to* marks *ore o oite saki ni ike* (“go on ahead without me”) as a quote—in this case, a self-quote.
- *itteru* is a contraction of *itte iru* (“am saying”), from *iu* (“say”).
- *n da* shows he’s making an explanation.

4

**Ninja B:** それじゃ 弁当 も 食べられません よ ね。 もらってっちゃんお。

*Sore ja bentō mo taberaremasen yo ne. Morattetchoo.*

in that case/then lunch also can’t eat (emph.)(colloq.) shall receive-and-go

**“Then you can’t eat your lunch either, can you? I’ll just take them both.”** (PL3; PL2)

**Ninja A:** こいつ はッ!

*Koitsu wa!*

this guy as for

**“You S.O.B.!”** (PL1)

- *sore* means “that,” and *ja* is a contraction of *de wa* (“if it is”), so *sore ja* is literally “if it is that/if that is the case” → “then.”
- *taberaremasen* is the PL3 negative form of *taberareru* (“can eat”), potential form of *taberu* (“eat”).
- *morattetchoo* is a contraction of *moratte itte shimaō*, the *-te* forms of *morau* (“receive/take/obtain”) and *iku* (“go”) plus the volitional (“let’s/I shall/I think I’ll”) form of *shimau* (“end/finish/put away”). *Moratte iku* = “receive/take and go,” or simply “take”; the volitional *shimaō* after the *-te* form of a verb often carries the feeling that the speaker intends to do the action even though it may be problematic in some way.
- *koitsu* is a contraction of *kono yatsu* (“this guy/fellow/thing”), a rough way of referring to another person, but when aimed directly at the listener in a contentious situation it becomes “you jerk/twit/S.O.B.” (or worse).

# いしいひさいち選集

Ishii Hisaichi Senshū

## SELECTED WORKS of ISHII HISAICHI



1

**Lord:** ずいぶん デカイ やつ だ な。  
Zuibun *dekai* *yatsu* *da* *na*.  
considerably large/huge guy/fellow is (colloq.)  
“He’s an awfully big guy, isn’t he?” (PL2)

日立って 忍びの 仕事 が できまい。  
Medatte shinobi no shigoto ga dekmai.  
stands out-(cause) undercover work (subj.) surely can’t do  
“I’d think he’d stand out too much to do undercover  
work.” (PL2)

- *zuibun* is an adverb meaning “quite/very much/considerably.”
- *dekai* is an informal word for “big/huge.”
- *yatsu* is an informal/slang word for “fellow/guy.”
- *medatte* is the *-te* form of *medatsu* (“stands out”); the *-te* form is being used to indicate the cause of what follows.
- *dekmai* is equivalent to the conjectural *dekinai darō/deshō*; *dekinai* is negative form of *dekiru* (“can do”), *do dekinai* = “surely/probably can’t do”



2

**Advisor:** 人 の 心理 の 盲点 として、あまり  
Hito no shinri no mōten to shite, amari  
people of psychology of blindspot as too much  
大きいとかえって 気がつかぬ ものです。  
ōkil to kaette ki ga tsukanu mono desu.  
if is big contrary not notice thing is  
“As one of the blind spots of human psychology,  
people actually tend not to notice a thing when it’s  
too big.” (PL3)

伊賀 忍法、 心証 棒大 変化 の 術です  
Iga ninpō shinshō bōdai henka no jutsu desu  
(name) ninja method impression/exaggeration/transform(mod.)tech. is  
“It’s the Iga School ninja technique of transformation  
by exaggerated impression.” (PL3)

**Sound FX:** のし のし のし のし のし  
Noshi noshi noshi noshi noshi

**Thud thud thud thud thud** (sound of heavy footsteps)

- *to* after the plain form of an adjective makes a conditional “if it is ~.”
- *kaete* introduces clauses that express something contrary to what you would normally expect in the situation.
- *ki ga tsukanai* = *ki ga tsukunai*, the negative form of *ki ga tsuku* (“notice”)
- 心証 (*shinshō*) is a pun on 射小 (*shinshō* bōdai) with the latter kanji is an expression for “exaggeration” (it literally means “make a needle/pin as big as a stick/pole”). The pun is strained, making it hard to pin down a literal meaning for it, but with the kanji used here *shinshō bōdai henka* means something like “transformation by/of exaggerated impression.”
- *ninja* techniques typically have names (often very grandiose and wordy) that end in *no jutsu* (lit., “the technique of ~”).



3

**Sound FX:** のし のし のし のし のし

Noshi noshi noshi noshi noshi **Thud thud thud thud**

**Guard:** あつ、コラ、 まで!

A!, kora, mate!

(interj.) (interj.) wait/stop

“Hey, hold it! Halt!” (PL1-2)

- *kora!* is an interjection for stopping someone who’s about to do something he/she shouldn’t: “Hey!/Stop that!/Hold it right there!”
- *mate* is the abrupt command form of *matsu* (“wait”); when spoken sharply it’s like “stop!/halt!”



4

**Ninja:** なん だあ?

*Nan* *dā?*

what is “Whadda ya’ want?” (PL2)

**Guard:** いえ、 別に

*Ie,* *betsu-ni.*

(interj.) [not] in particular

“Er, nothing in particular.”

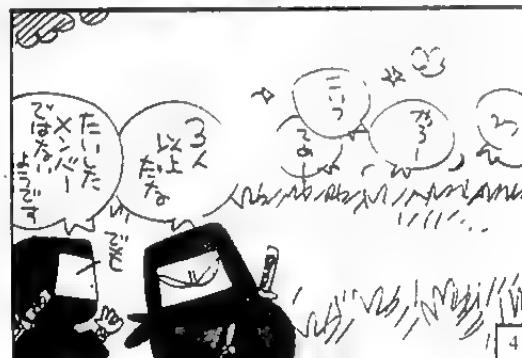
“Er, never mind.” (PL2)

- *betsu-ni* combines with a negative later in the sentence to mean “not particularly.” Here, *betsu-ni* by itself implies a negative ending to the sentence, something like *betsu-ni nai*.

# いしいひさいち選集

## Ishii Hisaichi Senshū

### SELECTED WORKS of ISHII HISAICHI



1

Ninja A: 敵 は 何人 だろう?

Teki wa nannin darō?

enemy as for how many people I wonder

“As for the enemy, I wonder how many men they are?”

“I wonder how many men the enemy has.” (PL2)

Ninja B: 2人 でしょうか? 3人 かな?

Futari deshō ka? Sannin ka na?

2 people could it be three people could it be

“Could it be two men? Maybe three?” (PL3; PL2)

- the standard counter suffix for people is *-nin*, but the first two are irregular: “1 person” = *hitori*, and “2 people” = *futari*. *Nannin* is the associated question word: “how many people.”

- darō* here is equivalent to *darō ka*, which after a question word asks “I wonder who/what/how/how many/etc.”
- deshō ka* is the PL3 form of *darō ka*, but since there’s not a question word in this case it’s like “I wonder if it is ~?/is it perhaps ~?/could it be ~?”
- ka na* also asks a conjectural question, “I wonder if it is ~?/is it perhaps ~?/could it be ~?”

2

Ninja A: よし、この弁当を...

Yoshi, kono bentō o...

good/all right this/these lunches (obj.)

“All right. I’ll take these lunches and ...”

- yoshi* (or *yōshi*) is an interjectory form of *ii/yo!* (“good/okay”), often used when declaring that one has decided to, or is about to, do some particular action.

- kono* can be either “this” or “these.” It’s only used as a modifier; the stand-alone word for “this/these” is *kore*.

3

Ninja A: えいっ。

Ei!

(interj.)

“There!”

- ei!* is an interjection that is shouted when thrusting/swinging/striking/throwing something at a person or thing.

4

Enemy: わ! やろー! こいつ! てめー!

Wa! Yarō! Koitsu! Temē!

(exclam.) guy/fellow this guy you

“Yikes! You jerk! You twit! You S.O.B.!” (PL1)

Ninja A: 3人 以上だな。

Sannin ijō da na.

3 people or more is (colloq.)

“At least three, it seems.” (PL2)

Ninja B: でも、たいしたメンバーではないようです

Demo, taishita menbā de wa nai yō desu.

but particularly great members is not appears that

“But it appears that it’s not a very elite membership.”

“But apparently not a very high caliber of people.”

(PL3)

- yarō* is an informal word for “guy/fellow,” but in a contentious situation it can mean “you jerk/you S.O.B.” (or worse).

- similarly, *koitsu* is a contraction of *kono yatsu* (“this guy/fellow/thing”), an informal way of referring to another person, but when aimed directly at the listener in a contentious situation it becomes “you jerk/twit/idiot” (or worse).

- temē* is a slurred *temae* (“you”). Though *temae* can be a fairly polite “you,” the slurred *temē* is very informal or even rough, and in contentious situations, it, too, becomes “you jerk/twit/S.O.B.”

- ~ da na makes a conjecture: “it’s ~, it seems/I guess.”

- in strict usage, *ijō* after a number or quantity means “[that number/amount] or more”; more loosely, it often means “more than [that number/amount]” (i.e., not including the stated number/amount).

- menbā* is from the English “member.”

- yō da/desu* means “it seems/appears (that).”

# オバタリアン Obatarian

by 堀田かつひこ / Hotta Katsuhiko



**1 Narration:** オバタリアンの夫は夫婦ゲンカをする。  
Obatarian no otto wa fūfū -genka o suru.  
obatarian 's husband as for husband & wife fight/spat(obj.) do/have  
**Obatarian's husband fights with his wife. (PL2)**

**Co-worker:** 夫婦ゲンカですか?  
Fūfū -genka desu ka?  
husband & wife fight/spat is it?

**"Did you have a fight with your wife?" (PL3)**

**Husband:** いや、お恥ずかしい。

*Iya, o-hazukashii.*

(interj.) (hon.)-embarrassing

**"Yes, I'm ashamed of myself." (PL2)**

- *fūfū* = "husband and wife," and *-genka* comes from *kenka* ("fight/quarrel"), so *fūfū-genka* = "marital spat," and *fūfū-genka (o) suru* = "have a fight with one's spouse."
- *iya* is a kind of "warm-up" word for exclamations of either consternation or delight/approval, here the former. Though in many contexts it serves as an informal "no," in cases like this it can instead serve as an implicit "yes."
- in spite of the honorific prefix *o*, *o-hazukashii* implies that the speaker himself is feeling shame/embarrassment.

**2 Husband:** やっちゃんあいかんとわかってるんだが...  
Yatchā ikan to wakatteru n da ga...  
if I do is no good (quote) know (explan.) but/and  
**"I know I shouldn't do it, and/but..."**

- *yatchā ikan* is a colloquial contraction of *yatte wa ikenai* ("must not do"), from the verb *yaru* ("do," informal).
- *wakatteru* is a contraction of *wakatte iru* ("know"), from *wakaru* ("come to know/understand"). *To* marks what comes before it as the specific content of what he knows/understands.
- *ga* can mean either "but" or "and" depending on the context, and the humor here depends partly on that ambiguity.

**3 Husband:** 一度はじまると女房のやつ  
ichido hajimaru to nyōbō no yatsu  
once if/when it begins wife who is guy/person  
一週間は口をきこうとしないし...  
isshūkan wa kuchi o kikō to shinai shi...  
one week at least doesn't try to speak and  
**"once we get going, my wife refuses to speak to me for at least a week,..."**

**Co-worker:** そんなに?!

*Sonna-ni?!*

that much

**"That long?" (PL2)**

- *hajimaru* = "[something] begins," and *to* after a non-past verb makes an "if/when" meaning. *Ichido hajimaru to* = "if [a fight] starts once" → "once [a fight] starts."
- *nyōbō* is an informal word for "wife."
- *yatsu* is an informal/slang word for "guy/fellow/person"; *no yatsu* after a name or title usually has at least a mildly belittling/derogatory feeling, and it's commonly used when finding fault with the person.
- *wa* after a number or quantity often has the meaning of "at least [that many/much]."
- *kuchi o kikō to shinai* is from the expression *kuchi o kiku* ("speak"); *-ō to shinai* is the negative form of the verb ending *-ō to suru*, which means "make an effort to/try to [do the action]"; the negative form often implies not only "doesn't try to [do the action]," but "refuses to [do the action]."

**4 Husband:** だからついやっちゃんうんだ。  
Dakara tsui yatchā n da.  
therefore involuntarily do it-(involuntary)(explan.)  
**"so I can't help myself." (PL2)**

- *tsui* as an adverb for actions implies the action is/was done "inadvertently/involuntarily/without thinking." In this case it essentially reinforces the same meaning included in *yatchā*.

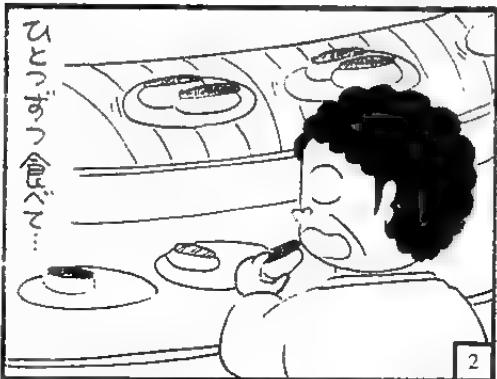
- *yatchā* is a contraction of *yatte shimau*, from *yaru* ("do"); *shimau* after the *-te* form of a verb can imply the action is done involuntarily/in spite of oneself.



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# オバタリアン Obatarian

by 堀田かつひこ / Hotta Katsuhiko



## What's an "Obatarian"?

The name Obatarian was coined from two words: *obasan* (おばさん), literally "aunt," but used as a generic term for middle-aged or adult women; and *batarian* (バタリアン), from the Japanese title of the 1985 American horror movie *Return of the Living Dead*—a reference to the "battalions" of zombies in the film. The word, now firmly ensconced in the Japanese language thanks to this popular manga, is used to refer to a type of middle-aged woman who strikes terror into the hearts of people around her, or at least raises a few eyebrows.

After years of managing husbands, children, and household budgets, "Obatarians" seem to be using the authority of their middle years to focus at last on themselves, without regard to the social norms dictated for women in Japan.

1 **Narration:** ちがう 種類 を ひとつずつ 取って...

*Chigau shurui o hitosara zutsu totte...*  
different kind/type (obj.) one plate each take-and

**To take one plate each of two different items and...**

• *hito-* = "one," and *-sara* is the counter suffix for "plates."

• *totte* is the *-te* form of *toru* ("take"); here and below, the *-te* form is being used like "and" to link events in a chronological sequence: "take [one plate each] and..."

2 **Narration:** ひとつ ずつ 食べて...

*hitotsu zutsu tabete...*  
one item/piece each eat-and

**Eat one piece each and...**

• *hitotsu* is a generic counter for "one item/piece"; it can be used for almost any inanimate object if one does not know a more specific counter.

• *tabete* is the *-te* form of *taberu* ("eat").

3 **Narration:** 残り を ひとつに まとめて...

*nokori o hitotsu ni matomete...*  
remainder (obj.) one into combine-and

**combine the remaining pieces onto one [plate] and...**

• *nokori* is a noun form of *nokoru* ("[something] remains/is left").

• *matomete* is the *-te* form of *matomeru* ("bring/put together/combine"); *hitotsu ni matomeru* = "combine into one."

4 **Narration:** 戻す オバタリアン流 回転ずし の 食べ方。

*modosu Obatarian-ryū kaiten-zushi no tabe-kata.*

return Obatarian -style revolving sushi for eating method  
**put it back—this is Obatarian's system for eating revolving sushi.**

• the verb *modosu* ("return/put back [to its former place]") here is the end of a complete sentence modifier that began in frame 1: "[she] takes one plate each of two different items and eats one each and combines the remainder into one and returns [it]." This complex sentence is one of three modifiers that ultimately modify *tabe-kata* ("eating method").

• *-ryū* is a suffix for indicating a "school/style/system" of doing something, so *obatarian-ryū* = "the Obatarian style/system" or "Obatarian's style/system."

• *kaiten-zushi* (lit., "revolving sushi") refers to inexpensive sushi served on plates that circle on a conveyor belt in front of the customers for their selection. Some shops price all plates the same but vary the quantity on each plate depending on the expense of the toppings/ingredients; others use color-coded plates to establish higher prices for premium items.

• *no* makes *kaiten-zushi* into a modifier for *tabe-kata*: "revolving sushi eating method" → "method for eating revolving sushi." In turn, *Obatarian-ryū* modifies this combination to give "the Obatarian-style method for eating revolving sushi." Finally the long sentence modifier, which started in frame 1, modifies that whole combination: "the Obatarian method/system for eating revolving sushi in which she takes one plate each of two different items and etc." The entire "sentence" in Japanese is actually only an elaborately modified noun, not a grammatically complete sentence.

# オバタリアン Obatarian

by 堀田かつひこ / Hotta Katsuhiko



1

Hat: マキドナルド

*Makidonarudo*

(business name)

*MakiDonalds*

**Obatarian:** あんこ 入ってない の どれ?  
*Anko haittenai no dore?*  
sweet bean paste not contained ones which  
“Which ones don’t have sweet bean paste?” (PL2)

**Narration:** とんちんかんな ことを さう、...  
*Tonchinkan na koto o iu...*  
absurd/incongruous thing (obj.) say  
She asks things that are completely incongruous;

- the artist has deliberately altered the name from マクドナルド *Makudonarudo*, the katakana rendering of “McDonalds.”
- anko* is a heavy paste made of mashed beans (most commonly red adzuki beans) boiled with sugar; it’s used in many traditional Japanese confections, so Obatarian is asking what she might well ask in a traditional sweet shop if she didn’t like *anko*, or wasn’t in the mood for it.
- a particle to mark *anko* as the subject of *haittenai* has been omitted. *Haittenai* is a contraction of *haitte inai* (“is not inside/is not contained”).
- anko haittenai* (“*anko* is not contained [in it]”) modifies the prounoun *no* (“one/ones”) → “ones that don’t contain *anko*”; *wa* to mark this as the topic of the question *dore?* has been omitted.

2

Sound FX: ガラ ガラ

*Gara gara*

Rattle rattle (sound of ice rattling)

**Narration:** アイスコーヒーのフタで 氷を かき出して かじる、...  
*Aisu kōhii no futa de kōri o kakidashite kajiru...*  
iced coffee of lid with ice (obj.) scrape out-and bites/chews  
she scoops out ice with the lid of her iced coffee and  
chews on it;

- kakidashite* is the *-te* form of *kakidasu* (“scrape/scoop out”); the *-te* form is being used like “and”: “scrapes/scoops out and ...”

3

**Narration:** 長居 した 後 やっと 帰る か と 思えば...  
*Nagai shita ato yatto kaeru ka to omoeba...*  
long stay did after finally go home (?) (quote) if/when think  
After she stays a long time, when you think ‘Is she finally  
leaving?’ ...  
after she stays a long time you finally see her get up to  
leave, and ...

- nagai* is literally “long stay,” and *nagai shita* is the plain/abrupt past form of its verb form *nagai suru*, which usually implies overstaying one’s welcome. *Nagai shita ato* = “after staying a long time.”
- omoeba* is a conditional (“if/when”) form of *omou* (“think”), and *to* marks the preceding question *yatto kaeru ka?* (“Is she finally going home?”) as the specific content of her thought.

4

**Narration:** トレイ も いっしょに ゴミ箱 に 捨てる

*torei mo issho ni gomibako ni suteru*

tray also together garbage bin into discard

she dumps her tray in the trash along with everything else:

ファースト・フード・オバタリアン

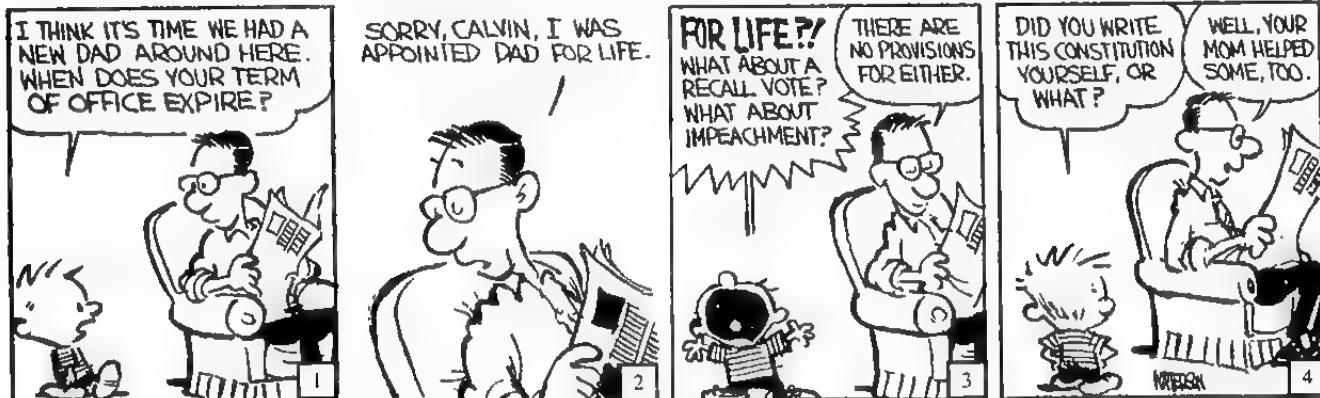
*fāsuto fūdo obatarian.*

fast food obatarian

the fast food obatarian.

**Obatarian doing fast food.**

- torei* is a katakana rendering of the English word “tray,” and *fāsuto fūdo* is a katakana rendering of the English words “fast food.”
- issho ni* (“together [with]”) here implies *gomii to issho ni* (“together with the trash”).
- gomii* = “trash/garbage,” and *-bako* is from *hako* (“box”); the *h* changes to *b* for euphony).
- in Japanese this is another elaborately modified noun, with three complete sentences acting as parallel modifiers for *fāsuto fūdo obatarian* (“the fast food obatarian”).



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1 **Calvin:** "I think it's time we had a new dad around here. When does your term of office expire?"

ウチでもそろそろパパを新しい人に替えるべきだとと思うんだ。  
Uchi demo sorosoro papa o atarashii hito ni kaeru beki da to omou n da.  
our house at soon dad (obj.) new person to change should (quote) think (explan.)

パパの任期はいつ切れるの?  
Papa no ninki wa itsu kireru no?  
dad/you's term as for when expire (explan.-?)

- we had a new dad が過去形なのは仮定法過去の用法で、この節はtimeを修飾している。It's (=It is) time + 仮定法過去は「～しているべき時期なのに、まだしていない」という意味で、ここでは「『パパ』が新しい人になっているべきときなのに、まだなっていない」ことを意味する。around here は「このあたり」→「うち」。
- office は「公職、官職」、term はその「任期」を指す。つまり、カルヴィンは「父親業」を公職とみなして発言したもの。

2 **Father:** "Sorry, Calvin, I was appointed dad for life."

カルヴィン、悪いけど、ぼくは終身で父親に任命されてるんだ。  
Karuvin, warui kedo, boku wa shūshin de chichoya ni minmei sareteru n da.  
(name) is bad/no good but I as for for life father to have been appointed (explan.)

- for life 「死ぬまで、終身の」

3 **Calvin:** "FOR LIFE?! What about a recall vote? What about impeachment?"

終身?! リコール投票はどうなのさ? 弹劾は?  
Shūshin?! Rikōru tōhyō wa dō nano sa? Dangai wa?  
for life recall vote as for what kind of (explan.)(colloq.) impeachment as for

**Father:** "There are no provisions for either."

どちらも規定にないね。  
Dochi mo kitei ni nai ne.  
neither provision/rule in not exist (colloq.)

- What about...? 「～はどうなのか／～についてはどう思うか」。
- either はここでは recall vote と impeachment を指し、no provisions for either で「どちらについても規定がない」。

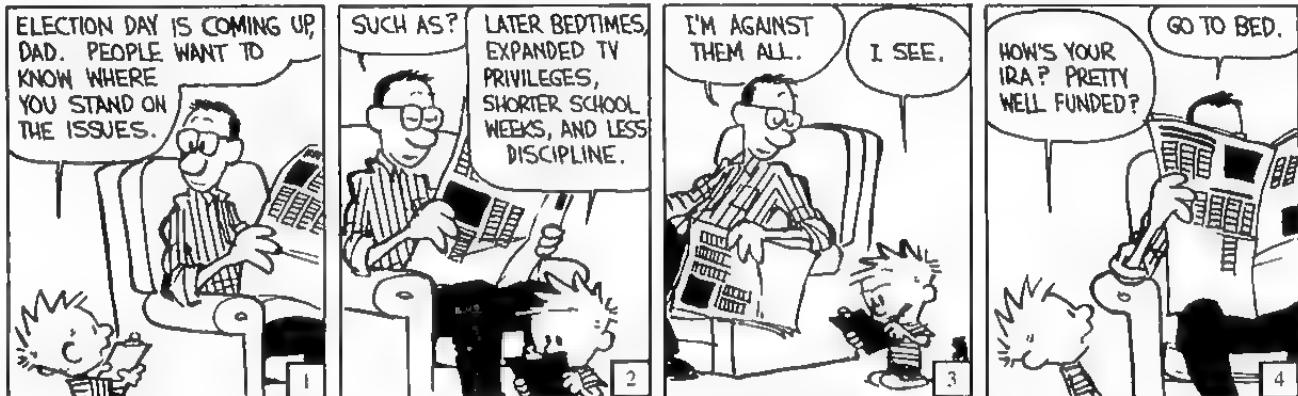
4 **Calvin:** "Did you write this constitution yourself, or what?"

この規約は自分で書いたかなんかしたわけ?  
Kono kiyaku wa jibun de kaita ka nan ka shita wake?  
this constitution as for by oneself wrote or something did circumstance

**Father:** "Well, your mom helped some, too."

そうだな、ママもちょっと手伝ったけどな。  
Sō da na, mama mo chotto tetsudatta kedo na.  
well/let's see mom also a little helped though (colloq.)

- ... or what? 疑問文の末尾に用い、「～かなにか？／～か、それとも？」など、ほかにも可能性があることを示唆する表現。
- Well, ... 会話で音楽を切り出すときや、相手の音楽を軽く受ける場合などに用いる。文脈によって「そうだね／まあ／でも」など。



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1 **Calvin:** "Election day is coming up, Dad. People want to know where you stand on the issues."

パパ、もうすぐ投票日だね。各種の論点についてみんな

Papa, mō sugi tōhyō-bi da ne. Kakushū no ronten ni tsuite minna  
dad soon election day is (colloq.) various issues regarding everyone

パパの意見を知りたがってるよ。

papa no iken o shiritagatteru yo.  
dad/you's opinions (obj.) wants to know (emph.)

• is coming up「近づいている」→「もうすぐだ」。

• issues はここでは政治的な論争の的となるような各種の問題を指す。stand は、賛成または反対などの「立場を取る」こと。where 以下の節は know の目的語となっており、知りたいことの内容を説明している。

2 **Father:** "Such as?"

たとえばどんな問題?

Tatoeba donna mondai?  
for example what kind of issues

**Calvin:** "Later bedtimes, expanded TV privileges, shorter school weeks, and less discipline."

就寝時間の繰り下げとか、テレビ視聴権の拡大、週の登校日数削減や、  
Shūshin jikan no kurisage toka, terebi shichō-ken no kakudai, shū no tōkō nissū sakugen ya,  
bedtime of postponement or TV viewing-rights of expansion weekly # of school days reduction and

規律の緩和なんか  
kirisu no kanwa nanka.  
discipline of deregulation things like

• such as は the issues を受けており、「たとえばどんな問題か」という意味。

• privilege は「特権／特典」で、ここでは父親が子供に認めているテレビ視聴権のこと つまり視聴時間や見てもいい番組の種類に対する制限を「つく」することを要求しているもの。また a school week とは登校日だけを数えた1週間を指し、米国では月曜から金曜までの5日間

3 **Father:** "I'm against them all."

どれも反対だね。  
Doremo hantai da ne.  
any/all against is/am (colloq.)

**Calvin:** "I see."

そう。  
Sō.  
that way

• against は意見が反対であることで、賛成は for。I'm = I am.

• I see 「わかった」→文脈に応じて「そう/なるほど」など。

• so は literally, "that way," but it's often used like "Is that so?/I see" in response to an explanation or statement.

4 **Calvin:** "How's your IRA? Pretty well funded?"

パパの個人退職金積立勘定は  
Papa no kejin taishokukin tsumitate kanjō wa  
dad/you's IRA as for

どんなぐあい? だいぶたまってる?  
donna guai? Daibu tamatteru?  
what kind of condition greatly saved up

• How's = How is. IRA は Individual Retirement Account の略で、個人で退職のために積み立てる積立金のこと

• pretty は「結構で」「かなりの/相当な」、pretty well で「かなりよく/かなり豊富に」。fund は「貯蓄する/積み立てる」こと

Pretty well funded? は Is it pretty well funded? の略で、「だいぶ積立金がたまつたか?」という意味。つまり「父親業」から退職する用意はできているかと尋ねたもの

**Father:** "Go to bed."

もう寝なさい。  
Mō nenasai.  
now sleep-(command)



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1 **TV Host:** "Cats are more popular than ever."

ネコの 人気 は ますます 上がっています。  
*Neko no ninki wa masumasu agatte imasu.*  
 cats' popularity as for more & more is rising

- more ... than ever 「これまで以上に／これまでになく」。

2 **TV Host:** "And our hidden camera shows why!"

隠し取り カメラ で その 理由 を 解明しました!  
*Kakushidori kamera de sono riyū o kaimei shinashita!*  
 hidden camera with/of/for that reason (obj.) made clear

- shows why = shows why cats are more popular than ever.

3 **TV Host:** "Payoffs to pet owners from the powerful cat lobby!"

強力な ネコ 団体 が 飼い主たち に 贈っている 賄賂 の せい です!  
*Kyōryoku na neko dantai ga kainushi-tachi ni okuite iru wairo no sei desu!*  
 powerful cat lobby/group (subj.) owners to is/are sending bribery of fault is

**Garfield:** "Lies! All lies!"

ウソ だ! 大ウソ だ!  
*Uso da! Ō-uso da!*  
 lie is big lie is

- payoffs 一般には「精算／報酬」などを意味するが、口語で「賄賂」の意味もある。lobby は圧力団体。

# Humorous Haiku

## Special Edition: "Spam-ku" on the Net

SENRYU

川柳

Spam is the trademark name for an inexpensive canned meat made from pieces of pork and ham, seasoned with spices and pressed into a loaf shape. It is remarkable for its distinctive bright pink color, as well as for the jelly-like substance it is packed in. Exactly which parts of the pig are used to make Spam is a matter of much speculation. Popular during the frugal war years and into the 1950s, Spam has earned a place in American culture as a kind of pop icon. Even during this age of nutritional awareness, the fatty canned meat stubbornly maintains a presence on the grocery shelves.

Now, there is a World Wide Web site featuring thousands of "spam-ku" written by amateur poets. Astronomer John Nagamichi Cho is responsible for creating the widely accessed web page, which can be found at: <http://www.naic.edu/~jcho/spam/sha.html>. Following are some of our favorites from Cho's archive.

Spam は、ブタのこま切れ肉を材料にして、香辛料で味付けし、ローフ型に押し固めた安価な缶詰肉の商標名です。Spam は、その独特的鮮やかなピンク色と、それを包んでいるゼリー様の物質が際立った特徴です。正確に言ってブタのどの部分の肉が使用されているのかは、さまざまな憶測の対象になっています。食生活が質素だった戦時中から1950年代にかけて人気のあったSpamは、米国の大衆文化の一種の象徴としての地位を確立しました。栄養に関する認識の深まつた今日でさえ、脂肪分の多いこの缶詰肉はしぶとくスーパーの棚に並んでいます。

現在、Spamをテーマにした「句」を何千も素人詩人(川柳人)から集めて載せている、ワールドワイドウェブ(WWW)サイトがあります。非常に多くのアクセスがあるこのウェブページは、天文学者、ジョン・ナガミチ・チョウが始めたもので、アドレスは <http://www.naic.edu/~jcho/spam/sha.html>です。以下に、チョウ氏の作品庫から漫画人が選んだ秀作を数句ご紹介します。

Illustrations by Anthony Owsley



*Oh tin of pink meat  
I ponder what you may be:  
Snout or ear or feet?*

缶の中  
Kan no naka—

ピンク肉これ  
pinku niku kore

鼻、耳、足?  
hana, mimi, ashi?

- *kan* = "can/food tin," and *kan no naka* literally means "inside the can/food tin."
- *pinku* is from the English "pink," and *niku* means "meat."
- *kore* = "this," *hana* = "nose/snout," and *kore hana?* can be shorthand for *kore wa hana desu ka?* ("Is this a snout?"). Adding the two other items makes it like "Is this a snout or ear or feet?"
- the Japanese version essentially says: "Oh pink meat in the tin. Is this a snout or ear or feet?"

- *make-* is the stem of *makeru* ("lose/be defeated/yield to temptation"), and the *-sō da/desu* ending of a verb implies "it seems/looks/feels like [the action will occur]," so *makesō da* = "[someone] is about to be defeated/yield to temptation." The person/thing one loses/yields to is marked with *ni*—in this case, *miwaku* ("charm/temptation").
- *bejitarian* is the katakana rendering of the English "vegetarian."
- the Japanese version essentially says: "About to give in to the pink temptress: a vegetarian."

*Pink beefy temptress  
I can no longer remain  
Vegetarian*

負けそうだ  
Makesō da

ピンクの魅惑に  
Pinku no miwaku ni

ベジタリアン  
Bejitarian



**Pink tender morsel  
Glistening with salty gel  
What the hell is it?**

- *hen* means "fragment/piece," so *pinku hen* = "pink morsel."
- *gitogito* is an "effects" word that gives the sense of something heavy and fatty; *shoppai* = "salty."
- *korya* is a contraction of *kore wa* ("as for this"), and *nan da* = "what is it?"
- the Japanese version essentially says, "This pink morsel, so fatty and salty: what is it?"

ピンク片  
Pinku hen

ギトギトしょっぱい  
gitogito shoppai

こりや何だ  
Korya nan da?



**Old man seeks doctor  
"I eat Spam daily," he says.  
Angioplasty**



スパム肉  
Supamu niku

毎日食べて  
mainichi tabete

医者通い  
isha-gayoi

- *tabete* is the *-te* form of *taberu* ("eat"); the *-te* form in this case indicates the cause/reason for the next mentioned action.
- *isha* = "doctor," and *-gayoi* is from *kavoi*, a noun form of the verb *kavou* ("commute to/frequent"), so *isha-gayoi* is a noun for "frequenting the doctor."
- the Japanese version essentially says: "Having eaten Spam daily, I frequent the doctor." All of our translations show how difficult it can be to cram the same meaning into so few Japanese syllables, but this one loses the most because "angioplasty," so effective in the English version, simply cannot be handled compactly in Japanese: 血管形成術 *kekkan keisei-jutsu*.

**Highly unnatural  
The tortured shape of this "food"  
A small pink coffin**

- *shizen* = "nature/natural," and *fushizen* = "unnatural." Adding *ni* makes it an adverb: "unnaturally."
- *yuganda* = "bent/contorted"; *fushizen ni yuganda* = "contorted unnaturally."
- *hate* refers to "the end/farthest point" in space or time; when speaking of a process, it refers to "the ultimate outcome/result."
- written with this kanji, *kan* means "coffin/casket"—providing a convenient pun on *kan* meaning "can/food tin." *Kan no naka* = "inside a coffin."
- the Japanese version essentially says: "After having been contorted unnaturally—inside a coffin."

不自然に  
Fushizen ni

ゆがんだ果ての  
yuganda hate no

棺の中  
kan no naka



Other web sites post English senryū on topics varying from politics to science fiction. Try out these sites:

- <http://www.naic.edu/~jcho/editorial/ehp.html> (editorial & political haiku; also by John Cho)
- <http://www.columbia.edu/~tg50> (a variety of haiku)
- <http://www.crew.umic.edu/~brinck/poetry/xmas-haiku.html> (Christmas-related haiku).

We'll send you a *Mangajin* T-shirt if we publish your *senryū*. Send to *Senryū*, *Mangajin*, Inc., PO Box 77188, Atlanta, GA 30357-1188 (or to [senryu@mangajin.com](mailto:senryu@mangajin.com)). All Japanese submissions will be translated into English and vice versa. 揭載分の川柳をお送りいただいた方には漫画人Tシャツを進呈します。宛先は *Senryū*, *Mangajin*, Inc., PO Box 77188, Atlanta, GA 30357-1188 または電子メールで [senryu@mangajin.com](mailto:senryu@mangajin.com) なお、日本語による投稿は英語に、英語による投稿は日本語に編集部で翻訳します

# 結婚しようよ

僕たちの失敗と成功

## 星里もちる

by Hoshisato Mochiru

*Kekkon Shiyō Yo* follows the story of the employees of a Tokyo wedding hall called Ageha Bridal Garden. Wedding halls, where both ceremonies and receptions take place, handle all the details of the wedding—including flowers, music, decorations, and food.

All a couple has to do is make choices. In Part One of our selection from *Kekkon Shiyō Yo*, however, Ageha wedding planners Masatoshi and Sanae are stuck with a groom who just can't seem to make a decision.



After the meeting, Masatoshi and Sanae, who were once engaged to each other, are in a bad mood. The independent Sanae is angry because the groom didn't seem to respect the bride's

job; Masatoshi points out that it's not her place to criticize. Before long they're having a loud argument in the breakroom. "I can't tell whether they like each other or hate each other," snickers a passing co-worker.



Masatoshi's sweet girlfriend, Shōko, also works at Ageha.

Hearing the fight, she follows Masatoshi to the rooftop where he goes to cool down. She invites him to her place that evening to look at the photos from a recent trip.



Later, over a beer, Sanae shares her opinions with Kakieda, her boss. "I'm just saying I don't like the view of life that equates marriage with happiness," she explains. The divorced Kakieda (who is secretly in love with Sanae) points out that many young couples fail to anticipate the difficulties of married life. They exchange a significant glance.

This episode opens with Shōko welcoming Masatoshi to her apartment.

# Let's Get Married

Our Failures and Successes



1

**Shōko:** いらっしゃい。*Irasshai.*

(greeting)

**“Come in.”** (PL4)

- *irasshai* is the abrupt command form of the PL4 verb *irassharu* (“come”); the verb is inherently polite, so even the abrupt form is polite. It’s used to greet/welcome visitors to your home; also by shopkeepers and restaurant workers to welcome customers as they enter.

2

**Masatoshi:** わあっ、祥子ちゃん、刺激的 カッコ。*Wā!* *Shōko-chan* *shigeki-teki* *kakko.*

(exclam.) (name-dimin.) stimulating/arousing appearance

**“Whoa, Shōko, what a dress!”** (PL2)**Shōko:** 夏 だから。*Natsu* *da* *kara.*

summer is because

**“Because it’s summer.”** (PL2)

- *wā* is an exclamation of surprise, but it can carry a feeling ranging from great joy to dismay, so it’s not immediately clear how the speaker feels.
- *-chan* is a diminutive equivalent of *-san* (“Mr./Ms.”), most typically used with the names of children, but also among close adult friends and family.
- *shigeki* means “stimulus” or “stimulation,” and *shigeki-teki* means “stimulating/provocative.”
- *kakko* is a colloquially shortened *kakkō*, which refers to one’s external appearance—most commonly how one is dressed.

3

**Shōko:** 嫌い?*Kirai?*

dislike

**“You don’t like it?”** (PL2)

- as in English, in informal speech almost any word can be turned into a question by raising the intonation at the end. More formally her question would be *kirai desu ka?* (“Do you dislike it?”).

4

**Masatoshi:** ううん。あ...*U’un.* *A...*

uh-uh/no (interj.)

**“Not at all. Oh, here, . . .”** (PL2)

- うん *un* is an informal “yes,” and うーん *ūn* represents pondering, but ううん *u’un* with a slight inflection between the two *u*’s means “no/not at all/never mind.” (Since the exact pronunciation is difficult to describe, the Mangajin tapes would be a good reference in this case.)
- *a* is an interjection used when suddenly noticing or remembering something.

5

**Masatoshi:** スイカ。 夏 だから。*Suika.* *Natsu* *da* *kara.*

watermelon summer is because

**“A watermelon. Because it’s summer.”** (PL2)**Shōko:** わあ。*Wā.*

(exclam.)

**“Oh, my!”** (PL2)

6

**Masatoshi:** 嫌い?*Kirai?*

dislike

**“You don’t like it?”** (PL2)



1



3

2



5

4

1

**Shōko:** 大好き。*Dai-suki.*

greatly like

**“I love it!” (PL2)**

- *dai-* is a prefix that means “large/large scale ~,” and *suki* means “like” (actually, it’s a noun that means “liking,” but it’s often equivalent to the English verb “like”) → “like very much/love.”

2

**Sound FX:** さわ さわ さわ*Sawa sawa sawa*

(effect of gentle, refreshing breeze)

- *sawa sawa* is related to the word *sawayaka (na)*, which is used to describe the crisp, cool, refreshing feeling of such things as fresh air, a breeze, a morning, after a bath, a cool drink, etc.

3

**Masatoshi:** これ、かわいく 写ってる じゃない。*Kore, kawaii utsutteru ja nai.*

this cutely/attractively is/are pictured is/are not

“In this one, you are pictured attractively, are you not?”

**“You look cute in this one.” (PL2)****Shōko:** やー だ、こんな の。顔、下膨れ。*Ya da, konna no. Kao, shinobukure.*

disagreeable/distasteful is this kind of one face lower part swollen/plump

“It’s disagreeable, this one. My lower face is swollen.”

**“Yuck! My cheeks look all puffy.” (PL2)**

- *kawaii* is the adverb form of *kawaii* (“cute/adorable”), modifying *utsutteru*.
- *utsutteru* is a contraction of *utsutte iru* (“is pictured”), from *utsuru*, which is a verb for “[an image] appears/reflects [on a TV or movie screen/in a mirror/in a photograph].” When modified by an adverb, it means “appears/reflects in the manner described,” so here he’s essentially saying she “looks/came out cute” in the picture.
- *ja nai* looks like “is not,” but here it’s a colloquial short form of *ja nai (desu) ka*, “isn’t it so?” This is often a purely rhetorical question, which actually makes it more of an assertion than a question. The assertion can be mild or strong depending on the tone of voice.
- *ya da* is a variant of *ya da*, “is distasteful/disagreeable,” one of the most common ways to express one’s objection to something in colloquial speech.
- *konna* is “this kind of” and *no* here is like the pronoun “one” → “this kind of one” → “this one.” *Konna* is often used to belittle or put down the item it modifies, and that is the feeling here.
- *shinobukure* literally means “swollen in the lower part,” and *kao ga shinobukure da/desu* describes a face with full, rounded cheeks.

4

**Masatoshi:** 僕のほうが変だよ。ほとんど目つむってるもの。*Boku no hō ga hen da yo. Hotondo me tsumutteru mono.*

I/me’s side (subj.) strange is (emph.) almost eyes are closed (explan.)

“I’m the one who looks weird. My eyes are almost closed.” (PL2)

- *boku* is an informal “I/me” used by males.
- *~ no hō ga* is used in making comparisons. It is attached to the greater of the two items being compared, and *hen* = “strange,” so *~ no hō ga hen* means “~ is stranger”; here it implies “I’m stranger [in the picture] than you are.”
- *hotondo* means “almost completely/almost all”—or if modifying a negative, “almost none/hardly at all.”
- *o*, to mark *me* (“eyes”) as the object of *tsumutteru*, has been omitted, as it often is in colloquial speech.
- *tsumutteru* is a contraction of *tsumutte iru* (“is/are closed”), from *tsumuru*, a colloquial variation of *tsuburu* (“close [one’s] eyes”).
- *mono* (lit., “thing”) is often used as an explanatory form at the end of a sentence in colloquial speech.

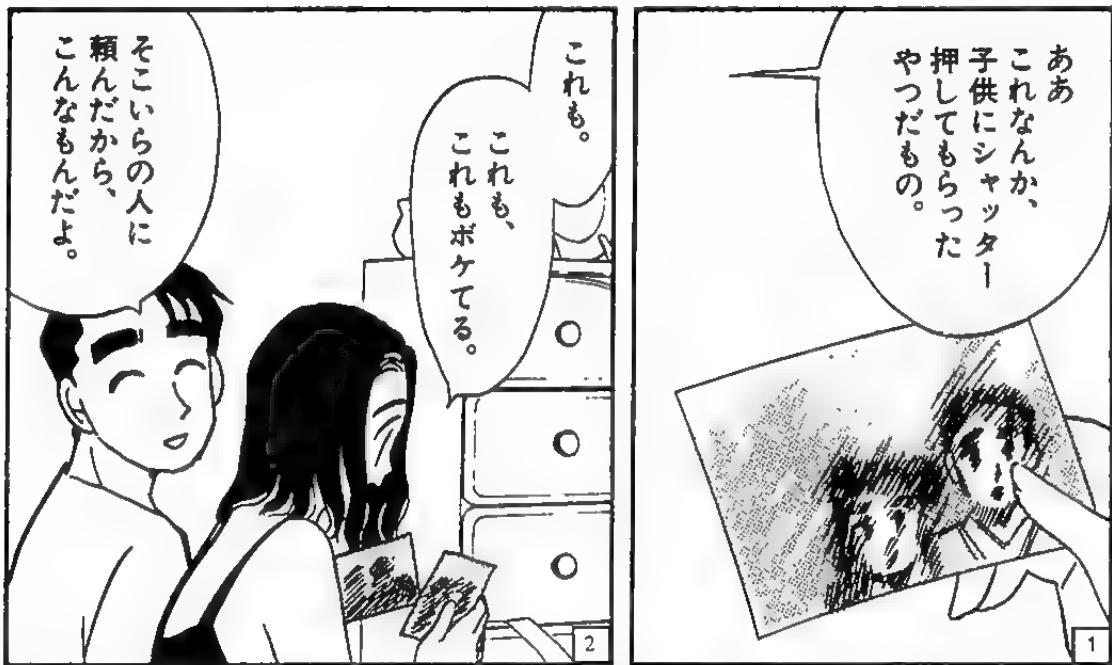
5

**Shōko:** 二人で 写ってる 写真、ろくな の ない なー。これも ぶれてる し...*Futari de utsutteru shashin, roku na no nai nā. Kore mo bureteru shi...*

two persons together are pictured photograph satisfactory one not exist (colloq.) this one too/also [camera] has moved and

**“We don’t have any decent pictures with both of us in them. This one’s blurred, too, and...” (PL2)**

- the particle *de* often marks the amount, number, or scope of people/items involved in an action, so *futari de utsutteru* means “two people are pictured together”—with “two people” in this case meaning “both of us.” *Futari de utsutteru* is a complete thought/sentence modifying *shashin* (“photograph[s]”) → “photographs in which we are both pictured together.”
- *roku na* = “satisfactory/proper/decent.” and *no* is again equivalent to the pronoun “one” → “a satisfactory/decent one.” *Ga*, to mark this as the subject of *nai* (“not exist”), has been omitted.
- *bureteru* is a contraction of *burete iru*, from *bureru*, which refers to the camera moving as the shutter is pushed. The form *burete iru* is usually applied to the look of the resulting picture → “is blurred.”
- *shi* is a relatively emphatic “and” for connecting two clauses; it cannot be used to connect two nouns as “A and B” (*to* or *ya* must be used for that purpose).



1 **Masatoshi:** ああ、これなんか、子供にシャッター押してもらったやつだもの。  
 A, kore nanka, kodomo ni shattā oshite moratta yatsu da mono.  
 (interj.) this one as for child to shutter asked to push-(for us) one is (explan.)  
 "Oh, yeah, as for this, it's one we asked a child to push the shutter for us."  
 "Oh, yeah, that's one we asked some kid to take for us." (PL2)

- *ā* is an interjection that expresses recognition/recollection, like "oh, yeah/oh, that's right."
- *nanka* is a colloquial *nado* ("something like"). It's often used when singling out one of several items for particular attention, so it can be very much like the topic marker *wa* "as for ~".
- *shattā* is from the English "shutter"; *o*, to mark it as the object of *oshite moratta*, has been omitted.
- *oshite* is the *-te* form of *osu* ("push"), and *moratta* is the plain/abrupt past form of *morau*, which after the *-te* form of a verb implies having someone else do the action for you. *Ni* marks the person asked to do the action.
- *kodomo ni shattā (o) oshite moratta* is a complete thought/sentence ("[we] asked a child to push the shutter") modifying *yatsu* ("thing/one").

2 **Shōko:** これも。これも。これもボケてる。  
 Kore mo. Kore mo, kore mo boketeru.  
 this one too this one too this one too is off focus  
 "And this one. And this one, and this one is out of focus, too." (PL2)

**Masatoshi:** そこのらの人に頼んだから、こんなもんだよ。  
 Sokoirā no hito ni tanonda kara, konna mon da yo.  
 thereabouts who are/were people to requested because this kind of thing is (emph.)  
 "We just asked whoever happened to be around, so this is about what you have to expect." (PL2)

- *boketeru* is a contraction of *bokete iru* ("is out of focus/blurry"), from *bokeru* ("become out of focus/blurry").
- *sokoirā* is an informal word for *sono hen* ("thereabouts/nearby").
- *tanonda* is the plain/abrupt past form of *tanomu* ("request a favor").
- *konna mon da* is literally "it is this kind of thing," idiomatically implying "this is about the size of it/this is about what you can expect."

3 **Shōko:** 二人で写った写真、ちゃんとしたの、一枚もないんですよ。  
 Futari de utsutta shashin, chanto shita no, ichimai mo nai n desu yō.  
 two persons together appeared photograph proper/successful one 1-count even not have(explan.) (emph.)  
 "A picture with both of us in it, as for one that came out sharp, we don't have a single one."  
 "We don't have a single good picture with both of us in it." (PL2)

**Masatoshi:** そうだつけか?  
 Sō da kke ka?  
 that way is (recollection) (?)  
 "Was it that way?"  
 "Really, is that right?" (PL2)

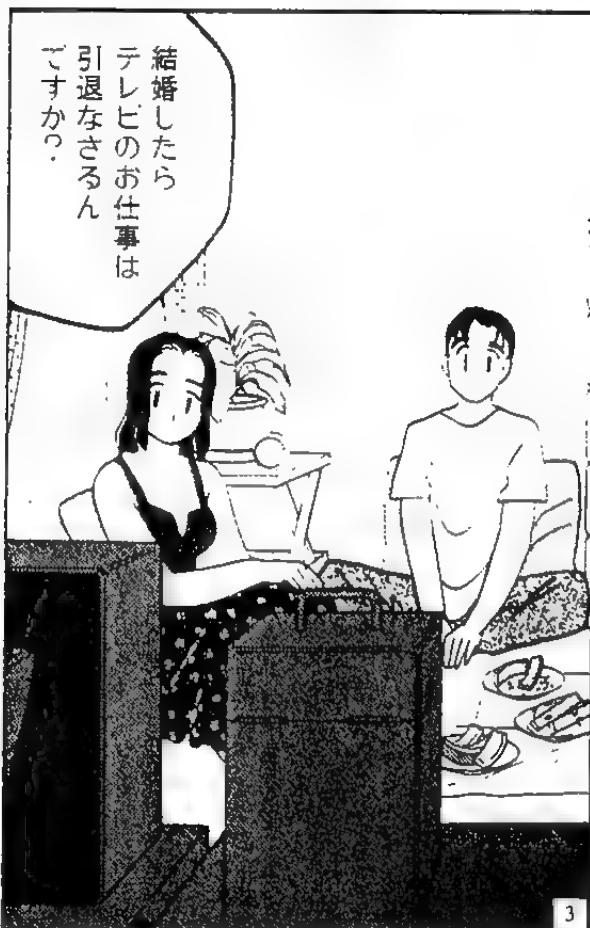
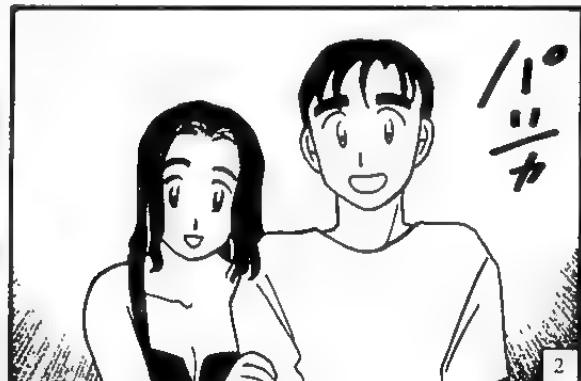
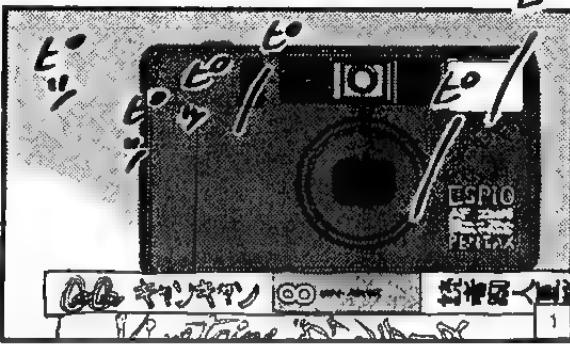
- *chanto* is an adverb meaning "duly/properly/perfectly/successfully," and *chanto shita no* is an expression for "one that is proper/well made/the way it's supposed to be." *Wa*, to mark this as the topic, has been omitted.
- *-mai* is the counter suffix for thin, flat things, such as paper, CDs, computer disks, coins, etc. The number 1 plus a counter plus *mo nai* means "there's not a single one," or "I/we don't have a single one."
- *kke* or *da kke* expresses an effort to recall something that isn't entirely clear in the speaker's memory, so here it probably implies he's trying to remember if previous batches of pictures were all like this one, as Shōko claims.

4 **Shōko:** そうですよ。一枚も。  
 Sō desu yo. Ichimai mo.  
 that way is (emph.) 1-count even  
 "That's right. Not a single one." (PL2)

- in this case *mo* alone is enough to imply *mo nai*.

5 **Shōko:** やっぱりしかるべき場所で、ちゃんとしたプロの人に撮ってもらった...  
 Yappari shikarubeki basho de, chanto shita puro no hito ni totte moratta, ...  
 after all/in the end suitable/proper place at proper professional who is person by had taken-(for us)  
 "In the end, maybe if we had our picture taken by a proper professional at a proper studio . . ."  
 [See next frame]

- *yappari* is a colloquial *yahari* ("after all/in the end"), implying that what she's about to say is the logical outcome or solution.
- *shikarubeki* is a modifier that implies the thing is "suitable/fit/properly appointed" for the desired purpose.
- *puro* is from the English "pro" for "professional"; *puro no hito* = "a professional," and *chanto shita puro no hito* = "a proper professional."
- *totte* is the *-te* form of *toru*, which when written with this kanji means "take a picture"; *moratta* is the plain/abrupt past form of *morau*, which after the *-te* form of a verb implies having someone else (marked with *ni*) do the action for you.
- *shikarubeki basho de, chanto shita puro no hito ni, totte moratta* is a complete thought/sentence ("[we] had [our picture] taken by a proper professional at a proper studio") modifying *hō* in the next frame.



**1 Sound FX:** ピー ピー ピー ピッ ピッ ピッ  
*Pii pii pii pil pil pil!*  
 (sound of self-timer signal approaching moment when picture will snap)

**2 Sound FX:** パシャ  
*Pasha*  
 Click (sound of shutter)

**3 TV Host:** 結婚したら テレビの お仕事 は 引退なさる んですか?  
*Kekkon shitara terebi no o-shigoto wa intai nasaru n desu ka?*  
 when get married TV of/on (hon.)-work as for will retire from (explan.-?)  
**“Will you retire from television when you get married?”** (PL4)

- *kekkon shitara* is a conditional (“if/when”) form of *kekkon suru* (“marry/get married”).
- *terebi* is shortened from *terebijon*, the full katakana rendering of the English “television.”
- *intai nasaru* is a PL4 equivalent of *intai suru* (“retire [from]”).

**4 TV Guest:** はい。彼 が 遠征 の 多い 仕事 なで、 家 に いてあげたいです。  
*Hai. Kare ga ensei no ōi shigoto na no de, uchi ni ite agetai desu.*  
 yes he (subj.) expeditions/tours (subj.) are numerous work because it is home at want to be/stay-(for him)  
**“Yes, since his work requires him to travel a lot, I want to be at home for him.”** (PL3)

- *ensei* in the military means “expedition/campaign”; in civilian life it refers to “touring/traveling/being on the road,” especially for sports competitions. *No* marks this as the subject of *ōi* (“numerous/large in quantity”), and the complete thought sentence *ensei no ōi* (“travels are numerous”) modifies *shigoto* (“work”) → “work in which travels are many.”
- *kare ga . . . shigoto na no de* looks like “because he is work in which . . .,” but it implies “because he is engaged in/he has work in which . . .”
- *ite* is the *-te* form of *iru* (“be in a place” for people and animate things), and *agetai* is the “want to” form of *ageru*; *ageru* after the *-te* form of a verb implies doing the action as a favor/benefit for someone else. The *-tai* form of a verb acts as an adjective, so its PL3 form is *-tai desu*.

**5 Masatoshi:** へー、 辞めちゃう のか、 この 人。  
*He, yamechau no ka, kono hito.*  
 (interj.) quit-(unexpected)(explan.-?) this person  
 “Gee, is it that she’s going to quit, this person?”  
**“How about that! So she’s going to quit.”** (PL2)

**Masatoshi:** けっこー 面白い レポーター だった のに。  
*Kekkō omoshiroi repōtā datta noni.*  
 quite interesting reporter was even though  
 “. . . even though she was a pretty interesting reporter.”  
**“What a shame. I thought she was a pretty good reporter.”** (PL2)

- *hē* is a mild exclamation of surprise like “Really?/Gee!/How about that!”
- *yamechau* is a contraction of *yamete shimau*, from *yameru* (“quit work” when written with this kanji); *shimau* after the *-te* form of a verb implies the action is unexpected, often with a feeling of regret.
- *~ no ka* literally asks “Is it that ~?” but often the question is purely rhetorical and the feeling is more like “Oh, so it’s that ~.”
- the syntax is inverted; normal order would be *kono hito (wa) yamechau no ka*.
- *kekko*, when modifying an adjective, means “quite/pretty/considerably.”
- *repōtā* is from the English “reporter.”
- *datta* is the plain/abrupt past form of *da* (“is/are”), PL2 form of *desu*.
- *noni* (“even though/in spite of the fact that”) at the end of a sentence often expresses disappointment/regret at something the speaker thinks should have happened but didn’t, or should not have happened but did. Here his disappointment is over the reporter’s decision to quit “even though/in spite of the fact that” she was a very good reporter.



1

**Shōko:** 彼 のために そう したい んです よ。あたし、よく わかる。  
 Kare no tame ni sō shitai n desu yo. Atashi, yoku wakaru.  
 he/him for sake of that way wants to do (explan.) (emph.) I/me well understand  
 “She wants to do it for her husband. I understand just how she feels.” (PL2)

**Shōko:** 百恵ちゃん だって そう だった ジやないですか。  
 Momoe-chan dattē sō datta ja nai desu ka.  
 (name-dimin.) also that way was was she not?  
 “Momoe-chan was that way, too, was she not?”  
 “Momoe-chan wanted it that way, too, remember?” (PL3)

**Masatoshi:** なんで かなあ。辞める くらい なら なんで あんなに 一生懸命 仕事する の かなあ。  
 Nande ka nā. Yameru kurai nara nande anna-ni isshō-kenmei shigoto suru no ka nā.  
 why I wonder quit extent if it is why that much diligently/all out work (explan.) I wonder  
 “I wonder why? If she's just going to up and quit, why did she work so hard the way she did?” (PL2)

- *no tame ni* = “for the benefit/sake of.”
- *sō* is literally “in that way/manner,” but it’s often equivalent to just “that”; *shitai* is the “want to” form of *suru* (“do”), so *sō shitai* = “wants to do that/it.”
- *atashi* is a variation of *watashi* (“I/me”), used mostly by female speakers. *Wa*, to mark it as the topic, has been omitted.
- *yoku* is the adverb form of the adjective *ii/yoī* (“good/fine”) → “well.” *Yoku wakaru* = “understand well” → “understand just how she feels.”
- Momoe-chan is Yamaguchi Momoe, one of the most popular *aidoru kashu* (“teen idol singers”) of the 1970s, who chose to completely give up her showbiz career when she got married in 1980.
- *dattē* is a colloquial *mo*, meaning “too/also.”
- *ja nai desu ka* literally asks “is it not?/was it not?”—but it’s a rhetorical question that actually makes a fairly strong assertion. In this case it has the feeling of a reminder tag: “remember?”
- *nande* is an informal *naze* (“why”), and *ka nā* asks a question like “I wonder.”
- *~ kurai nara* after a verb implies “if you are going to the extent/extreme of [doing the action], then ~.”
- *isshō-kenmei* (or *ishsho-kenmei*) is a verb modifier that implies doing the action “all out/for all you’re worth/as if your life depended on it.”

2

**Shōko:** そ う で す ね。糸野さん の 言 う と お り か も。  
 Sō desu ne. Konno-san no iu tōri kamo.  
 that way is (colloq.) (name-hon.) (subj.) say exactly as may be  
 “Well, yes. It may be exactly as you say.”  
 “Well, yes, I guess you’re right.” (PL2)

- *sō desu* means “it is that way/it is so” → “yes,” but adding *ne* or *nē* can make it a somewhat less straightforward expression of agreement. To a large extent, Shōko is saying this just to be agreeable; elsewhere in this story, she shows that she fully subscribes to the traditional view that a woman should give up her work when she gets married.
- the name *Konno-san* here is essentially equivalent to “you”; Japanese speakers often use their listener’s name in situations when an English speaker would say “you.”
- *tōri* is a word that follows a verb or a complete sentence to mean “exactly in accordance with [the described action].” It’s functionally a noun, so a preceding sentence follows the rules of modifying sentences—with the subject often marked by *no* instead of *ga*: *Konno-san no iu tōri* = “exactly as Konno-san says/exactly as you say.”
- *kamo* is short for *kamo shireinai* (“might be/may possibly be”).

3

**Masatoshi:** うん… いや… そ う で も…  
 Un... iya..., sō demo...  
 uh-huh (interj.) that way (emph.)  
 “Uh-huh... I mean... it’s not really...” (PL2)

- *iya*, an informal “no,” is often used as an interjection when trying to clarify or backtrack from something just said: “no/ well/I mean.”
- *sō demo* implies *sō demo nai* (lit. “it’s not really so”); not quite sure what to make of her sudden flip-flop and agreement, Masatoshi searches for a way to say it’s not really all that big of a deal.

4

**Masatoshi:** さて。  
 Sate.  
 (interj.)  
 “Well then.” (PL2)

- *sate* is an interjection used when one is about to begin/do something, like “well now/well then.”

5

**Shōko:** 帰る の?  
 Kaeru no?  
 go home (explan.-?)  
 “You’re going home?” (PL2)

- in informal speech it’s very common to ask a question using just the explanatory *no* with the intonation of a question.



1 **Masatoshi:** うん。  
Un.  
uh-huh/yeah  
“Uh-huh.” (PL2)

2 **Shōko:** この頃...  
Kono koro...  
recently/these days  
“Recently ...”

3 **Shōko:** 抱いて くれないです ね。  
daite kurenai desu ne.  
embrace/make love not do to/for me (colloq.)  
“you never make love to me anymore.” (PL3)

- *daite* is the *-te* form of *daku* (“hold in arms/brace/hug,” or “make love to”), and *kurenai* is the negative form of *kureru*, which after the *-te* form of a verb implies “do for/to me” → “[you] don’t make love to me.”

4 **Masatoshi:** あ、いや、その。 別に、 しなくとも 楽しい し...  
A, iya, sono. Betsu-ni, shinakute mo tanoshii shi...  
(interj.) (interj.) that [not] particularly even if don’t do is fun/enjoyable (cause)  
“Ah, well, that is, even if we don’t do it, it’s fun, so ...”  
“Ah, well, you know, I have a good time even if we don’t do it ...” (PL2)

- *a*, *iya*, and *sono* can all be considered hesitation words in this case—words spoken to fill the gap while he tries to figure out what to say.
- *betsu-ni* is followed by a negative to mean “not particularly ~.” Here the implication is that he doesn’t particularly feel that they need to make love in order to have a good time.
- *shinakute mo* is a conditional “even if” form of *shinai* (“not do”), negative of *suru* (“do”).
- *shi* can be used to indicate a cause or reason—in this case the reason why he doesn’t particularly feel they need to make love.

5 **Shōko:** 楽しい ですか?  
Tanoshii desu ka?  
is fun/enjoyable (?)  
“Is it fun?”  
“Do you have a good time?” (PL3)

**Masatoshi:** え?  
E?  
what?/huh?  
“Huh?” (PL2)

## Book Review

(continued from page 54)

where on page 73 the deceased is identified by his personal items, including his spectacles, whereas on page 77 it is suggested that the victim’s spectacles were, in fact, not found at the scene.

Lapses such as these, and a generally weak writing style, cause the reader to pause rather too often. The book’s strengths, however, outweigh many of these flaws. The episodes which are related are well researched. The author makes an effort to present alternative viewpoints and is, at the same time, effective in indicating his own convictions. One may wonder at his frequent reliance on such popular mystery writers as Matsumoto Seichō and Kikumura Itaru, and indeed their reasoning in these cases, based wholly on “evidence” available through the press rather than actual case files, must be suspect. At the same time, the frequency with which writers like Matsumoto engage in speculation concerning these spectacular crimes indicates the very significant role of Japanese popular culture in the dissemination of information to the public, particularly in view of the

reticence of the Japanese authorities. In a sense, one might say that the machinery of popular culture effectively fills in the gaps left by the Japanese state, which, historically, tells its citizenry only as much as it needs to know.

The real value in *Shocking Crimes of Postwar Japan* lies in its role as a starting point for future research. Although the facts are well researched and largely accurate, no attempt is made to assess the deeper social implications of these crimes, and it is this lack of curiosity that prevents this book from being of direct use to anyone with more than a casual interest in Japan. However, it may prove to be a useful resource for more serious scholars of Japanese culture and society; many of the episodes related in Schreiber’s text can and should be expanded into more serious essays which will examine the larger picture of postwar Japanese history.

**Matthew C. Strecher** is an assistant professor of Japanese language and literature at the University of Montana.

• dismember = (死体を) ばらばらにする (*shitai o*) *barabara ni suru* • acquittal = 無罪判決 *muzai hanketsu* • obnoxious = はた迷惑な *hata meiwaku na!* (ここでは) 酒乱にの (koko de wa) *shuran no* • throw tantrums = かんしゃくを起こす *kanshaku o okosu* • banality = 新鮮味のなさ *shinsenmai no nasa* / 陳腐さ *chinpusa*



1

**Shōko:** あたし と いて 楽しい ですか?

*Atashi to ite tanoshii desu ka?*

1/me with being fun/enjoyable is it

“Is it fun being with me?”

“**Do you have a good time being with me?**” (PL2)

- *ite* is the *-te* form of *iru*, which in the form ~ *ni iru* means “be in/at/on/etc. [a place]” for people and animate things; in the form ~ *to iru* it means “be with [someone].” The *-te* form here indicates manner or means; *atashi to ite* = “by/while being with me” → “being with me.”

2

**Masatoshi:** 楽しい よ 楽しくなきゃ 来ない よ

*Tanoshii yo. Tanoshikunakya konai yo.*

is fun/enjoyable (emph.) if not enjoyable wouldn't come (emph.)

“[Yes,] it is fun. If it wasn't fun, I wouldn't come.”

“**Sure. I wouldn't come if I didn't.**” (PL2)

- *tanoshikunakya* is a contraction of *tanoshiku nakereba*, a conditional (“if/when”) form of *tanoshikunai*, negative of *tanoshii* (“is fun/enjoyable”) → “if it isn't/wasn't fun.”
- *konai* is the negative form of *kuru* (“come”).

3

**Shōko:** 本当に?

*Hontō ni?*

truly/really

“**Really?**” (PL2)

- *hontō ni* is the adverb form of *hontō* (“true/truth”). She makes it a question by raising the intonation on *ni*.

4

**Masatoshi:** うん。

*Un.*

“**Uh-huh.**” (PL2)

5

**Shōko:** 紺野さん。

*Konno-san.*

(name-hon.)

“**Konno-san.**” (PL2)

**Masatoshi:** うん。

*Un.*

“**Uh-huh.**” (PL2)

- even though they have now been dating for quite a while, she continues to call him by his surname plus the polite *-san* (“Mr.”)—another sign of Shōko’s relatively traditional mindset. It doesn’t actually sound quite as stiff and formal as if an English-speaking woman addressed her boyfriend as “Mr. So-and-so.”



1

**Shōko:** お盆 に 大分 の 両親 が 上京してくる んです。  
 Obon ni Ōita no ryōshin ga jōkyō shite kuru n desu.  
 (festival name) at/for (place name) in/from parents (subj.) come up to Tokyo (explan.)  
 "During Obon, my parents in Ōita will be coming up to Tokyo."  
"My parents in Ōita will be coming to visit during Obon." (PL3)

- *Obon* (or *Urabon*) is the Buddhist "All Souls' Days" observed each year from August 13 through 15 or 16 (or the same days in July in some areas). It is a heavy travel time as families gather for the festivities much as Americans get together at Thanksgiving time. Here the parents are coming up to the city from the country, but more typically, those living in the city return to their ancestral homes in the country.
- Ōita is the name of a prefecture in northern Kyushu, as well as of its capital city.
- *jōkyō*, written with the kanji for "up" and "capital," refers to traveling "up" to Tokyo from any outlying area, North, South, East, or West (more than commuting distance is assumed). *Jōkyō shite kuru* is from *jōkyō suru* ("travel up to Tokyo"); *kuru* after the *-te* form of a verb implies the action moves toward the speaker, so the form *jōkyō shite kuru* is only used by those who live in Tokyo and are speaking about someone else coming to visit.
- she uses the explanatory *n desu* because she's "explaining" the situation that leads her to make her next request.

2

**Masatoshi:** うん。

*Un.*

"Uh-huh." (PL2)

3

**Shōko:** 会ってください。

*Atte kudasai.*

meet-request)

"I'd like you to meet them." (PL3)

**Masatoshi:** うん。

*Un.*

"Uh-huh." (PL2)

- *atte* is the *-te* form of *au* ("meet"), and *kudasai* after the *-te* form of a verb makes a relatively polite request.

4

**Masatoshi:** え?

*E?*

*huh?/what?*

"Huh?" (PL2)



Take'emon-ke no Hitobito  
The Take'emon Clan

by 佐藤竹右衛門 / Satō Take'emon

社長あいさつ



1

MC: では、まず 社長よりひとこと。

Dewa, mazu shachō yori hitokoto.

then first of all co. pres. from one word

**"Well then, to begin with, a word from our president."**  
(PL2)

FX: コク

Koku

(effect of slight bow)

- *dewa*, often contracted to *ja* in less formal situations, is a conjunction meaning "in that case/then/well."

- *yori* sounds somewhat more formal than *kara* ("from").

2

Sign: 株式会社 テレパシー 研究所

Kabushiki-gaisha Terepashii Kenkyū-jo  
joint stock co. telepathy research center

入社 式

Nyūsha -shiki

enter-company ceremony

**Telepathy Research Center, Inc. New Employee  
Welcoming Ceremony**

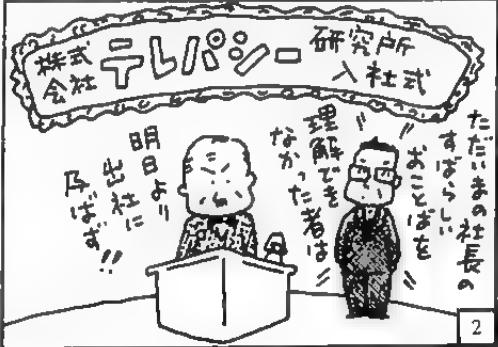
MC: ただいまの 社長 のすばらしいおこたばを  
Tadaima no shachō no subarashii o-kotoba o  
just now of co. pres. 's wonderful (hon.)-words (obj.)

理解できなかつた者 は  
rikai dekinakatta mono wa  
could not understand persons as for

明日 より 出社 に及ばず。  
asu yori shussha ni oyabazu.  
tomorrow from coming to work is unnecessary

**"Those unable to comprehend the wise words be-  
stowed on you by the president just now need not  
come to work tomorrow."** (PL2)

- *kabushiki* means "stock," and *-gaisha* is from *kaisha* ("company/corporation"; in combinations, *k* changes to *g* for euphony) → "joint stock company."
- *terepashii* is from the English "telepathy."
- *kenkyū* refers to scientific or academic research, and *-jo* is a suffix meaning "place of/for [the stated activity]" → *kenkyū-jo* = "research center" (can also be *kenkyū-sho*).
- *nyūsha* combines the kanji for "enter" and "company," to refer to a person's "hiring by/joining" a company, and *-shiki* means "ceremony." *Nyūsha-shiki* refers to a ceremony to formally welcome the "entering class" of new employees.
- *tadaima* means "just now," and adding *no* makes it a modifier for the phrase *shachō no subarashii o-kotoba* ("the president's wonderful words").
- *rikai dekinakatta* is the plain/abrupt past form of *rikai dekinai* ("can't understand"), negative of *rikai dekiru* ("can understand"); *dekiru* replaces *suru* to make the potential ("can/be able to") form of *suru* verbs.
- *tadaima no shachō no subarashii o-kotoba o rikai dekinakatta* is a complete thought/sentence ("[you] couldn't understand the president's wonderful words of just now") modifying *mono* ("person").
- *shussha* is a noun referring to the act of "going/coming to work."
- *~ ni oyabazu* is an expression for "[doing the action] is unnecessary/need not [do the action]."

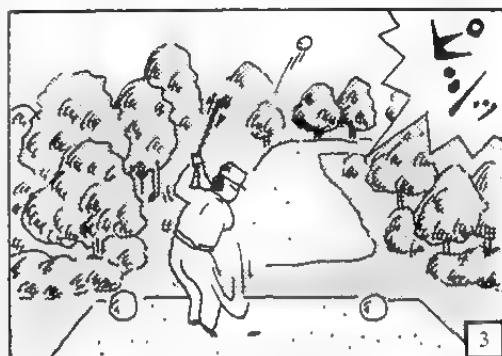


2

Take'emon-ke no Hitobito  
The Take'emon Clan

by 佐藤竹右衛門 / Satō Take'emon

うんどう 不足



Title: うんどう 不足  
*Undō -busoku*  
exercise insufficiency  
Out of Shape

- the suffix *-busoku* is from *fusoku* ("insufficiency/shortage").

1

Cat: ゴロゴロ してないで 少し 運動する か?  
*Goro-goro shitenade sukoshi undō suru ka?*  
(lie about FX) instead of doing a little exercise (?)  
"Shall we get a little exercise instead of just lying around doing nothing?" (PL2)

Dog: んー  
N-  
uh-huh/yeah  
"Yeah." (PL2)

- goro-goro shitenade* is a negative *-te* form of *goro-goro suru* ("lie about idly," usually at home, indoors). A verb in the *-naide* form followed by another verb implies "do the second action without/instead of doing the first action."
- undō* is a noun for "exercise," and *undō suru* is its verb form.

2

Cat: ホッケーかピンポンかな?  
*Hokkē ka pinpon ka na?*  
hockey or Ping Pong is it perhaps?  
"Hockey, or maybe Ping Pong?"  
"Shall we play hockey, or maybe Ping Pong?" (PL2)

Dog: いや、ゴルフだな。  
iya, gorufu da na.  
no golf is (colloq.)  
"No, golf." (PL2)

- hokkē, pinpon* and *gorufu* are from the English "hockey," "Ping Pong," and "golf," respectively.
- ka* between two nouns is like "or."
- ka na* at the end of a sentence typically asks a conjectural question, "I wonder if it is ~?/Is it perhaps ~?/Could it be ~?"
- iya* is a colloquial word for "no"; the more formal equivalent is *ie*.

3

Sound FX: ピシッ  
*Pishi!*  
Whack (sound of golf club hitting ball)

4

Dog: あー、スライスしちゃった。池に入った。  
Ā suraisu shichatta. Ike ni haitta.  
(exclam.) slice did-(regret) pond into entered  
"Oh no, I sliced it. It went in the pond." (PL2)

Sound FX: ポチャ  
*Pocha*  
Splash (sound of ball landing in water)

Cat: 運動不足だからなア。次、オレだ、オレ。  
*Undō -busoku da kara nā. Tsugi, ore da, ore.*  
exercise insufficiency is because (colloq.) next I/me is I/me  
"Because you really don't get enough exercise. Next is me, me."  
"You're just out of shape. Next it's my turn, my turn." (PL2)

- a long *ā* as an exclamation often carries a feeling of dismay/alarm.
- suraisu* is from the English "slice," and its verb form is *suraisu suru*. *Suraisu shichatta* is a contraction of *suraisu shite shimatta*, the *-te* form of *suraisu suru* plus the plain/abrupt past form of *shimau*, which after the *-te* form of a verb often implies the action was undesirable/regrettable."
- haitta* is the plain/abrupt past form of *hairu* ("enter"). *Ni* marks the place entered.
- nā* adds colloquial emphasis: "you really are/do ~."
- ore* is a rough, masculine word for "I/me."

# BASIC JAPANESE through comics

## Lesson 59 • You (Part 1)

In our last two lessons, we took an up-close look at pronouns for “I.” Now, we will turn our sights to the many pronouns which can be used for “you.” For every case and situation that calls for a certain “I,” there seems to be a corresponding “you,” again dependent on the age, gender, and social status of the people interacting.

It is important to remember that the Japanese generally tend to avoid using personal pronouns, and the use of those for “you” is particularly limited. Entire conversations take place without the speaker once referring to the listener with any of these pronouns. A Japanese speaker is more likely to use the listener’s name, with *-san* or *-kun* or *-chan*; or if the listener is of higher social status, his or her title. Still, there are many situations in which the pronouns can’t be avoided—and then the trick is to select the right one.

In this lesson, we cover some of the most common words for “you.” These same words are sometimes used in ways that make them equivalent to English words other than “you” (e.g., a wife-to-husband *anata* = “dear/honey”); we cover some of these uses, too.

### Anata as a generic “you”

A woman had her purse snatched just as Matsuda was walking out of the hotel where he works. The policeman who came to the scene asks people in the crowd if they can give a description of the thief.



© Ishinomori Shōtarō / Hotel, Shogakukan

**Policeman:** あなた は?  
*Anata wa?*  
 you as for  
 “How about you?” (PL3)

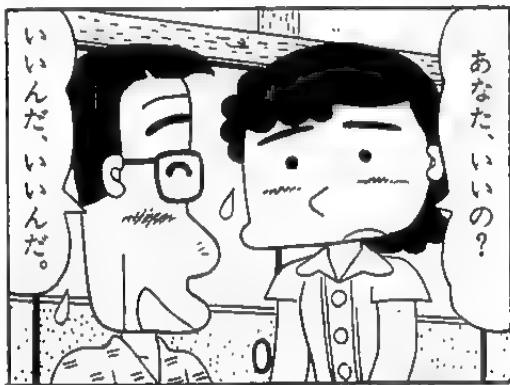
**Matsuda:** いえ、 いえ...  
*I-e, ie...*  
 (stammer) no  
 “N-no...” (PL3)

- the policeman doesn’t ask a full question, but it’s obvious from the context that he’s asking Matsuda the same thing he asked the others: *Anata wa hannie no kao ya sugata o oboete irasshainamu ka?* (“Do you remember the face or appearance of the criminal?”).

*Anata* is a polite and relatively formal “you”—the safest choice for general use when you don’t know your listener’s name or title.

## Anata as a term of endearment

Mr. Katō has just promised his children that if either of them can give him a good laugh, he will give that child a thousand-yen note. His wife, however, is not certain it's such a good idea.



© Saigan Ryōhei / *Yūyaku no Uta*, Shogakukan

**Mrs. Katō:** あなた、いい の?  
*Anata, ii no?*  
 you is good/OK (explan.-?)  
 "Dear, is it OK?"  
 "Dear, are you sure?" (PL2)

**Mr. Katō:** いい んだ、いい んだ。  
*ii n da, ii n da.*  
 is good/OK (explan.) is good/OK (explan.)  
 "It's OK, it's OK."  
 "Sure, sure." (PL2)

- the explanatory *no* is often used to ask questions in colloquial speech—especially among women.
- Mr. Katō's use of the explanatory *n da* is mostly for emphasis.

Japanese women typically use *anata* (lit.. "you") to address their husbands in the way English-speaking women use "dear."

## Anata: less formal—and even rude

These women are at a cooking class where they are required to fillet a fish. The middle-aged *obatarian*, while slicing her fish into three or four fillets, notices that the younger housewife is having trouble slicing even one.



© Hotta Katsuhiko / *Obatarian*, Take Shobo

**Obatarian:** ちよっと あんた、それでも 主婦?!"  
*Chotto anata, sore demo shufu?!*  
 a little you even with that housewife  
 "Hey you! [That's the best you can do] and yet you're a housewife?!"  
 "Hey, you! With that you call yourself a housewife?!" (PL2)

- chotto* literally means "a little," but it's also used as an informal interjection to get someone's attention: "Hey!"
- sore demo* literally means "even if/though [the situation] is that," implying "still/yet/nevertheless." In this case it is like "Even though you can't do any better than that, you still are/claim to be a housewife?"

*Anata* is a contraction of *anata*. It has a very informal/familiar feeling, and, even without an aggravated tone of voice, can be quite rude if used in the wrong situation, so it's best avoided by beginners.

## Kimi (adult to child)

The baby, Akio, has just finished a photo session for an advertisement. Several other babies were also photographed, but Akio was the only one who posed just as the photographer asked.



© Okazaki Jirō / After 0, Shogakukan

**Man:** 今日もあきお君よかったですね  
*Kyō mo Akio-kun yokatta ne.*  
 today also (name-fam.) was good (colloq.)  
**"You were a good model again today, Akio."** (PL2)

たぶん、君の分を使うと思うよ。  
*Tabun, kimi no bun o tsukau to omou yo.*  
 probably you 's portion (obj.) use (quote) think (emph.)  
**"I think we'll probably use your part."** (PL2)

- *yokatta* is the plain/abrupt past form of *ii/yoi* ("good/fine").
- *kimi no bun* (literally, "your portion/segment/share") refers to the portion of the photo session in which Akio appeared.

*Kimi* is an informal word for "you" used mostly by males when addressing equals or subordinates/juniors.

## Kimi (peer to peer)

Nitta and Tanaka have entered a new high school and joined the soccer club. When Nitta learns that Tanaka already knows the team's pretty manager, he wants to make sure he will be introduced to her.



© Ohnuma Tsukasa / Shonen, Kodansha

**Nitta:** 君と一緒に友達になれそうだ  
*Kimi to wa tomodachi ni naresō da.*  
 you with as for friends seems like [we] can become  
 "It looks like you and I can become friends."  
**"I think you and I should be friends."** (PL2)

**Tanaka:** え? あ、こちらこそ!  
*E? A, kochira koso!*  
 (interj.) (interj.) this side/me also  
**"Huh? Oh, me too!"** (PL3)

- *naresō da* is from *nareru*, the potential ("can/be able to") form of *naru* ("become"); the *-sō da/desu* ending of a verb implies "appears/looks like [the action will take place]."
- *kochira* (literally, "this side/direction") is a common way of referring to oneself or one's own group ("I/we"), and *koso* is an emphatic particle. *Kochira koso* can be literally rendered as "I/we all the more" or "I/we as much as you"; the expression essentially implies that the sentiment is mutual, and it's most typically used as a set phrase for returning greetings and expressions of thanks.

**Kimi (superior to subordinate)**

The president of Tōa Appliances has just learned that it was Ms. Kizaki who thoughtfully put a vase of flowers in the men's room at the office.



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**Shachō:** 我社 にきみのよな 女子 社員  
*Uchi ni kimi no yōna joshi shain*  
 our company in you like female employee  
 が いてくれた んだ ね  
*ga ite kureta n da ne.*  
 (subj.) existed-for us (explan.) (colloq.)  
 “**This company is lucky to have an employee like you.”**  
 (PL2)

- **我社** means “our company” and would normally be pronounced *wagasha*, but in this case the author has indicated that it is pronounced *uchi*. *Uchi* literally means “inside,” but it’s also frequently used to refer to one’s own family, company, or other in-group.
- *kimi no yōna* (“[who is] like you”) modifies *joshi shain* (“female employee”).
- *ite* is from the verb *iru* (“exist/be [here]”), and *kureta* is the past form of *kureru*, which implies that the preceding act/verb is for the benefit of the speaker.

**Kimi (husband to wife)**

This husband and wife are discussing the wife’s mother, who recently moved in with the family. The wife has just said that her mother is truly grateful to her husband for allowing her to live with them.



© Saigan Ryōhei / Yuvake no Uta, Shogakukan

**Husband:** ハハハ、何 言ってる んだい  
*Ha ha ha, nani itteru n dai.*  
 (laugh) what is/are saying (explan.)  
 君 は 一人娘 なんだ から、あたりまえ じゃないか  
*Kimi wa hitori-musume na n da kara, atarimae ja nai ka.*  
 you as for 1-person daughter (explan.)-is/are because a matter of course is it not?  
 “**Ha ha ha, what are you talking about? You’re an only child, so it’s only natural.”** (PL2)

**Wife:** それは そう なんだ けど...  
*Sore wa sō nan da kedo...*  
 that as for like that (explan.)-is but  
 “**That’s true, but...**” (PL2)

**FX:** ハハハ ホホホ  
*Ha ha ha Ho ho ho* (masculine and feminine laughs)

- *itteru = itte iru* (“am/is/are saying”), from *it* (“say”).
- asking a question with *dai* or *n dai* is generally restricted to males in very informal situations. It feels a little softer than asking with the abrupt *da* or *n da*.
- *hitori* = “one person,” and *hitori-musume* refers to a daughter who is the family’s sole/only child.
- traditionally it is the responsibility of the eldest son to take care of the parents in their old age. If a daughter is an only child, however, the responsibility falls to her.

## Omae (peer to peer)

Michiru and Shōta are on a trip sponsored by their company dormitory. The previous night, they sneaked up to the girls' bath area and listened in on the chatter. Unfortunately, Michiru overheard them saying that they thought he was a strange, wishy-washy sort with a weird haircut, and now he is down in the dumps.



© Kubonouchi Eisaku / Tsurumoku Dokushin Ryō Shogakukan

**Shōta:** お、お前... 彼女達が言つてたこと気にして...  
 O- omae... kanojo-tachi ga itteta koto ki ni shite...  
 (stammer) you girls (subj.) were saying things letting bother  
 "Y-you... Are you letting what those girls said bother you?" (PL2)

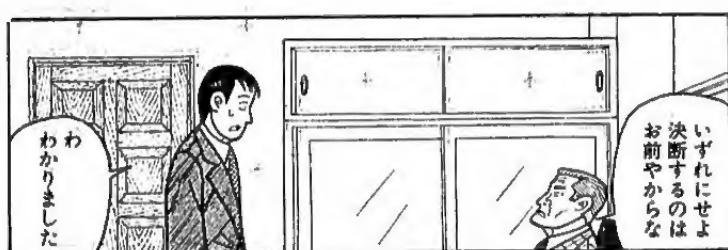
**Michiru:** 正太君はいいよ...  
 Shōta-kun wa ii yo...  
 (name-fam.) as for good/lucky (emph.)  
 "You're lucky, Shōta..." (PL2)

- *itteta* = *itte ita* ("were saying"), past form of *itte iru*. *Kanojo-tachi ga itteta* ("those girls were saying [it]") modifies *koto* ("things").
- *ki ni shite* is the *-te* form of *ki ni suru* ("mind [it]/let [it] bother you").
- when ~ *wa ii yo/na/he* follows a personal name or pronoun, *ii* (lit. "good/fine/OK") can imply "[the person] is lucky." Michiru goes on to say that Shōta is lucky because he is popular with the girls, and he has a girlfriend back home.

*Omae* is used mostly by men with their peers and subordinates. Among friends and family it generally carries a feeling of familiarity—though it can also sound quite rough depending on tone of voice. When used with people other than acquaintances it feels quite rough.

## Omae (superior to subordinate)

Haibara works at Empire Finance Company in Osaka. He is now consulting with the company president about a business deal, where he must decide in favor of either an individual investor or a large corporate one.



© Aoki Yūji / Naniwa Kin'yūdō, Kodansha

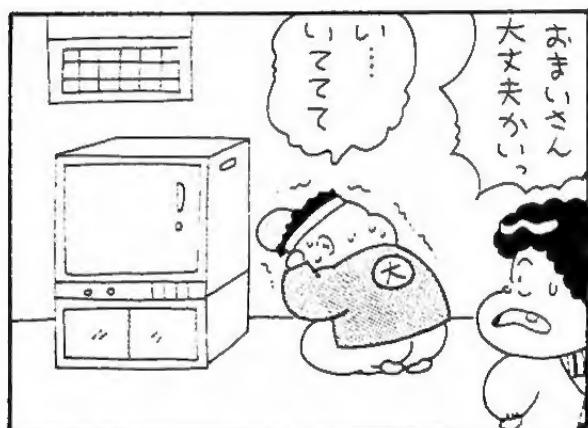
**Shachō:** いずれにせよ、決断するのは  
 Izure ni seyo, ketsudan suru no wa  
 in any case decision do/make one as for  
 お前やからな。  
 omae ya kara na.  
 you because it is (colloq.)  
 "In any case, you're the one who has to make  
 the decision." (PL2)

**Haibara:** わ、わかりました。  
 Wa- wakarimashita.  
 (stammer) understood  
 "I- I understand."  
 "Y-yes sir." (PL3)

- *izure ni seyo* is a phrase meaning "in any case/either way."
- *ya kara* is dialect for *da kara*, "because it is ~."
- *wakarimashita* is the PL3 past form of *wakaru*, "come to know/understand." The word is often used in response to instructions/commands/requests to indicate one will do as asked: "Yes/OK/I will do it."

## Omae-san

Beranmei Tōchan has just tripped over an iron on the floor and hit his head on the television.



© Tachibanaya Kikutarō / Beranmei Tōchan, Take Shobo

**Wife:** おまいさん、大丈夫 かい?  
*Omai-san, daijōbu kai?*  
 you-(hon.) all right (?)  
 "Are you all right, dear?"  
 "Is it all right, dear?" (PL2)

**Tōchan:** い、いてて。  
*I- ite-te-te!*  
 painful  
 "Ow-owwww!"

- *omai-san* is a dialect variation of *omae-san*—a rare instance in which *-san* is appended to a pronoun.
- *kai* is a colloquial *ka*, for questions, but with a softer, friendlier feeling. Normally *daijōbu kai* in a situation like this would be asking "are you all right?" but in this case it turns out she's actually more concerned about the television, not her husband.
- *ite* is a corruption of the adjective *itai* ("painful"), which is also used as an exclamation of pain: "ow/ouch!"

*Omae* from a male speaker can sound rough, but *omae-san* spoken by a woman addressing her husband usually has an endearing tone.

## The formal Otaku

The appliance salesman Minamida has made friends with a struggling car salesman, Ōki. Although Minamida can't help him out by buying a car for himself, he introduces his friend to Kawai, an appliance retailer who has a truck that's on its last legs and is thus a potential customer for Ōki.



© Gyō & Kondō / Eiga Tentei Nisshi, Scholar

**Kawai:** 下取り で それだけ 出してくれる の なら  
*Shitadori de sore dake dashite kureru no nara*  
 trade-in for that much will pay me (explan.) if it is  
 おたくの 車 買つてもいい よ!  
*otaku no kuruma kattemo ii yo!*  
 your co.'s car am willing to buy (emph.)  
 "If you'll give me that much for my trade-in, I'd be happy  
 to buy a car from you!" (PL2)

**Minamida & Ōki:** エッ!  
*E!*  
 "Really?!"

- *sore* = "that" and *dake* = "only," but the combination often means "that much" rather than "only that."
- *dashite* is from *dasu* (lit., "put/take out"), which in money matters means "pay/expend." *Kureru* after the *-te* form of a verb implies the action will be done to or for the speaker.
- *kate* is the *-te* form of *kau* ("buy"); *-te mo ii* grants permission or expresses willingness to do the action.

*Otaku* literally means "your home/house," but it also serves as a relatively formal "you." In the corporate setting, where it's used a great deal, the meaning becomes "you/your company."



# Tease me, squeeze me, dial me

**A**re you lonely, frustrated, and Japanese? Do you dream of meeting that special someone who thinks you're someone special, too?

Well, you're not alone. There's a place where you can go to meet others who are in the same boat. It's called a telephone club—*terekura* (テレクラ). From the land that brought you the Walkman and karaoke machines, here's the latest in palmtop systems that set you afloat in a world of unchecked fantasy. And you'll be doing what you do there in pairs.

What that is depends on you. Encounters over the phone line in Japan can (and very often do) involve restrained, tentative conversations between strangers seeking permanent companionship. The *terekura* as originally conceived is a place where fellows hoping to meet Ms. Wonderful (or just to talk to somebody) pay to enter tiny booths and hook into a chat line. On the other end are their female counterparts, usually calling from home at no charge.

Then what happens? It's up to the couple. Thirty minutes of desultory conversation, a friend tells me, is usually enough for the parties to reach their private conclusions. "I happen to be free tomorrow . . ." one or the other may venture to say.

"*Itsu no ma ni ka denwa o kirarechatta*" ("All of a sudden the phone went dead") is one common refrain following such a proposal. Otherwise, the pair may agree to meet in a restaurant or coffeehouse. They might even go so far as to show up and identify themselves.

Even if they do, shrugs my friend, nothing ever really works out when people connect through *terekura*.

But he keeps going back.

Males who ask questions like "*Ima doko ni imasu ka? Donna fuku o kite imasu ka?*" ("Where are you now? What are you wearing?") are cut off instantly. Any hint that the conversation's becoming a platform for aural voyeurism promptly lands the offender in hyperspace.

This surprised me, since phone sex seems to be a sport enjoyed by both men and women. Ads for it are plastered everywhere in Japan—telephone poles, sports newspapers, erotic manga—and the target audience is certainly not limited to men. "*Shigekiteki na deai o yakusoku shimasu*" ("We promise you a stimulating encounter"), proclaims a typical ad in a "lady's comic" (an erotic manga for women), which deliberately uses the punning phone number 518-456. These



by William Marsh

requests their messages generate.

According to a want ad in one lady's comic soliciting applicants for the position of *terehon* companion, the worker may operate in one of two modes, depending on whether her intent is to initiate *nōmaru senyō tsūshotto* (ノーマル専用ツーショット, "normal priority encounters") or *tere-etchi tsūshotto* (テレエッチツーショット, "telephone sex encounters").

*Tsūshotto* ["two-shot"], by the way, was the supercool 80s way to describe a couple having their picture taken together, but refers here to the alleged intent of both callers: an actual telephone meeting. *Etchi* refers to the letter H, short for *hentai* [変態, "pervert"] but usually spoken jocularly so that the nuance is closer to "horny."

Tellingly, the want ad cited above was sandwiched between other ads offering *terehon supiido kyasshu* (テレホンスピードキヤッショ, quick cash from loan sharks) and *ekusutashii ittaikan daiaru* (エクスタシー一体感ダイアル, "total body ecstasy dial," a series of pornographic tapes for feminine delectation).

The ad stipulates that applicants be 18-30. Experience is not a prerequisite: *Mikeikensha no kata mo josei staffu ga shinsetsu shidō itashimasu* ("Female staff will instruct the inexperienced in a kindly manner"), and the successful applicant can start right away, with earnings sent to an account of her choosing.

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# vocabulary summary

## From Kaji Ryūsuke no Gi, p.17

|       |                       |                           |
|-------|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| 是非    | <i>zehi</i>           | by all means              |
| 説得する  | <i>settoku suru</i>   | persuade                  |
| いきなり  | <i>ikinari</i>        | suddenly/abruptly         |
| 不意打ち  | <i>fuiuchi</i>        | surprise attack           |
| 選挙    | <i>senkyo</i>         | election                  |
| 立候補する | <i>rikkōho suru</i>   | stand as a candidate (v.) |
| 維持する  | <i>iji suru</i>       | maintain                  |
| 地盤    | <i>jiban</i>          | constituency              |
| 崩壊する  | <i>hōkai suru</i>     | collapse (v.)             |
| 政治    | <i>seiji</i>          | politics                  |
| 向いている | <i>muite iru</i>      | suit/be suited [to/for]   |
| 職業    | <i>shokugyō</i>       | occupation                |
| 合う    | <i>au</i>             | fit/suit (v.)             |
| 疑問    | <i>gimon</i>          | doubt (n.)                |
| 内閣    | <i>naikaku</i>        | cabinet/government        |
| 状況    | <i>jyōkyō</i>         | circumstances             |
| 解散    | <i>kaisan</i>         | dissolution               |
| にらむ   | <i>niramu</i>         | stare/fix one's eyes [on] |
| 準備    | <i>junbi</i>          | preparations              |
| 勝手な   | <i>katte na</i>       | selfish                   |
| 願い    | <i>negai</i>          | request (n.)              |
| 辞表    | <i>jihyō</i>          | resignation               |
| 提出する  | <i>teishutsu suru</i> | submit/present (v.)       |
| 出馬    | <i>shutsuba</i>       | candidacy                 |
| 挨拶    | <i>aisatsu</i>        | announcement              |
| 態勢    | <i>taisei</i>         | readiness                 |
| 整える   | <i>totonoeru</i>      | arrange/establish         |
| 始めて   | <i>hajimete</i>       | for the first time        |
| 内容    | <i>naiyō</i>          | contents                  |
| 発足    | <i>hossoku</i>        | inauguration              |
| 指示する  | <i>shiji suru</i>     | instruct                  |
| 追伸    | <i>tsuishin</i>       | postscript                |
| 次男    | <i>jinan</i>          | second son                |
| 長男    | <i>chōnan</i>         | first son                 |
| ずっと   | <i>zutto</i>          | much more                 |
| おかしい  | <i>okashii</i>        | odd                       |
| 秀才    | <i>shūsai</i>         | bright/talented person    |
| 一方    | <i>ippō</i>           | on the other hand         |
| 成績    | <i>seiseki</i>        | grades                    |
| 不思議な  | <i>fushigi na</i>     | marvelous/amazing         |
| 官僚    | <i>kanryō</i>         | bureaucrat                |
| 断然    | <i>danzen</i>         | by far/decidedly          |
| 合理的   | <i>gōri-teki</i>      | rational/pragmatic        |
| 要素    | <i>yōso</i>           | elements/traits           |
| すでに   | <i>sude-ni</i>        | already                   |
| 決断    | <i>ketsudan</i>       | decision                  |
| 遺志    | <i>ishi</i>           | dying wish                |
| 継ぐ    | <i>tsugu</i>          | carry on/follow           |
| 即断する  | <i>sokudan suru</i>   | immediately decide        |
| 老婆心   | <i>rōbashin</i>       | excessive solicitude      |
| 衆議院   | <i>shūgiin</i>        | House of Representatives  |
| 会館    | <i>kaikan</i>         | hall/building             |
| 案外    | <i>angai</i>          | unexpectedly              |
| すんなりと | <i>sunnari to</i>     | smoothly/easily           |
| 渡す    | <i>watasu</i>         | hand over/give over       |
| 簡単に   | <i>kantan ni</i>      | easily                    |
| 発言    | <i>hatsugen</i>       | statement                 |
| ゴロツキ  | <i>gorotsuki</i>      | racketeer/extortionist    |

|      |                 |                            |
|------|-----------------|----------------------------|
| マスコミ | <i>masukomi</i> | mass media                 |
| 流す   | <i>nagasu</i>   | leak (v.)                  |
| 押さえる | <i>osaeru</i>   | take control/possession of |
| 制す   | <i>seisu</i>    | control (v.)               |
| 派閥   | <i>habatsu</i>  | faction                    |

## From Selected Works of Ishii Hisaichi, p. 38

|      |                |                      |
|------|----------------|----------------------|
| ずいぶん | <i>zuibun</i>  | considerably         |
| 目立つ  | <i>medatsu</i> | stand out            |
| 忍び   | <i>shinobi</i> | undercover action    |
| 心理   | <i>shinri</i>  | psychology           |
| 敵    | <i>teki</i>    | enemy                |
| 置く   | <i>oku</i>     | set/leave in a place |
| 傷    | <i>kizu</i>    | wound (n.)           |

## From Obatarian, p. 42

|         |                      |                    |
|---------|----------------------|--------------------|
| 種類      | <i>shurui</i>        | kind/type          |
| 残り      | <i>nokori</i>        | remainder          |
| 夫婦      | <i>fūfū</i>          | husband & wife     |
| 女房      | <i>nyōbō</i>         | wife               |
| とんちんかんな | <i>tonchinkan na</i> | absurd/incongruous |
| ゴミ箱     | <i>gomibako</i>      | garbage bin        |
| 捨てる     | <i>suteru</i>        | discard (v.)       |
| 野菜      | <i>yasai</i>         | vegetables         |
| いため     | <i>itame</i>         | stir-fry (n.)      |
| 団地      | <i>danchi</i>        | housing complex    |
| 台所      | <i>daidokoro</i>     | kitchen            |
| せまい     | <i>semai</i>         | small/crammed      |
| 改造する    | <i>kaizō suru</i>    | remodel            |

## From Kekkon Shiyō Yo, p.65

|        |                     |                      |
|--------|---------------------|----------------------|
| 刺激的    | <i>shigeki-teki</i> | stimulating/arousing |
| 夏      | <i>natsu</i>        | summer               |
| 嫌い     | <i>kirai</i>        | dislike              |
| スイカ    | <i>suika</i>        | watermelon           |
| 顔      | <i>kao</i>          | face                 |
| 変だ     | <i>hen da</i>       | is strange           |
| ほとんど   | <i>hotondo</i>      | almost all           |
| 写真     | <i>shashin</i>      | photograph (n.)      |
| ろくな    | <i>roku na</i>      | satisfactory         |
| 頼む     | <i>tanomu</i>       | request (v.)         |
| ちゃんとした | <i>chanto shita</i> | proper/successful    |
| やっぱり   | <i>yappari</i>      | after all/in the end |
| しかるべき  | <i>shikarubeki</i>  | suitable/proper      |
| 場所     | <i>basho</i>        | place                |
| 撮る     | <i>toru</i>         | take [a picture]     |
| 引退する   | <i>intai suru</i>   | retire from          |
| 遠征     | <i>ensei</i>        | expeditions/tours    |
| 抱く     | <i>daku</i>         | embrace/make love    |
| 別に     | <i>betsu ni</i>     | [not] particularly   |

## From Take'emon-ke no Hitobito, p. 84

|       |                     |                |
|-------|---------------------|----------------|
| まず    | <i>mazu</i>         | first of all   |
| すばらしい | <i>subarashii</i>   | wonderful      |
| 理解できる | <i>rikai dekiru</i> | can understand |
| 運動する  | <i>undō suru</i>    | exercise (v.)  |
| ホッケー  | <i>hokkē</i>        | hockey         |
| ピンポン  | <i>pinpon</i>       | Ping Pong      |

The Vocabulary Summary is taken from material appearing in this issue of Mangajin. It's not always possible to give the complete range of meanings for a word in this limited space, so our "definitions" are based on the usage of the word in a particular story.